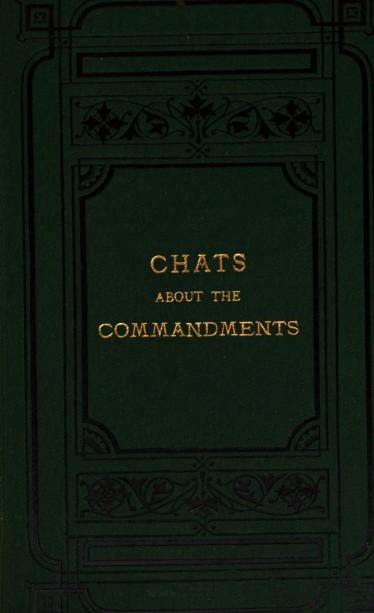
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CHATS ABOUT THE COMMANDMENTS.

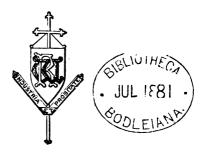
A Book for Girls.

A SEQUEL TO

CHATS ABOUT THE ROSARY;

OR,

Aunt Margaret's Little Reighbours.



R. WASHBOURNE, 18 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON. 1880.

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TO THE

CHILDREN OF ALL AGES,

IN TOWN AND COUNTRY,

WHO HAVE STUDIED WITH ME THE

TEACHINGS OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE,

This Little Book

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

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Chats about the Commandments.

INTRODUCTION.

ANUARY'S frosts have set in, and the streets and parks are hard as iron. Crowds stand on the bridge over the Serpentine, watching the skating; for it is Sunday, and everybody is free. Amongst the motley crowd stand a group of young girls, who seem thoroughly to enjoy the bright scene. They laugh merrily at some trifling accident, and their gay spirits, together with the attraction of youthfulness, draw upon them the attention of two gentlemen, who invite them to take a lesson in skating. The proposal was met by hesitation on the part of the eldest of the three girls, whose higher colour bespoke her of country birth; but a junior took upon herself the part of spokeswoman, and replied:

- 'Thank you, sir; but we can't stay, for we have an engagement at three o'clock;' and she drew her companions away.
- 'Madam would have excused us for half an hour,' said Bertha, the country girl; 'and I do think I could manage to skate. We used to slide on the pond at Irwin, and it was first-rate.'
- 'Yes, Bertha,' replied Edith, with an air of grave experience; 'but it wouldn't do in London, I assure you. We will ask Madam.'
- 'I believe Madam would bring us here herself,' said Kate. 'She said last Sunday she loved to see us enjoy ourselves. But see, here is Minnie: she is so much older, she will know best.'

They were walking briskly across the Park, and Minnie was making for the same point as themselves, but by a different path. She saw the young girls, and as they beckoned to her, she crossed the sward to join them.

- 'I am so glad that you are in such good time,' said Minnie; 'I have seen you ever so long, but I thought perhaps you wouldn't care to be walking with a housemaid, so I kept my distance.'
- 'What nonsense, Minnie, when we are going to have tea together! And you have been the one to get all arranged so nicely for us.'
- 'That is only because I had the luck to know Madam the longest. It is seven years ago now, when she was living with her brother at our village

in Wales, and we used to go to her at all hours for instructions. After I came to London, though the place she found me is such a good one, I used to feel very desolate, especially on Sunday, wanting some one to turn to that would care for one.

'But have you got no friends, Minnie?'

'Yes, plenty of what are called friends. But I wanted somewhere to go to where I could feel at home and safe, and tell my troubles, and, even if I had been silly, I could say it out without fear of being mocked or down-trodden. Oh! I was glad when Madam came to keep the Home.'

'And then your mother wrote to you to find me and take me to Madam. I was frightened at first, wasn't I?'

'Yes, Bertha, but only the first day. wasn't it a good day for you!'

'Yes, indeed!' Bertha replied warmly: and Edith and Kate added:

'Yes, and for us too.'

They had reached the Park gates, when another person joined them. She seemed about three-andtwenty, very agreeable, looking the most ladvlike of the party, certainly. She addressed Minnie:

'I can't be mistaken in calling you Mary McGraith, I think?

'I am Mary McGraith, Miss Morris. I didn't know you till I heard your voice. It is five years 1--2

since I left home, and I think you had gone before.'

- 'Yes, I was apprenticed a year before that. It is only a day or two since I learned by accident that Madam Margaret had charge of the Home. I went to see her, and she told me of the Sunday gatherings that you were getting up. She said that you, Minnie, and Miss Rivers were the chief movers in them, and that you would tell me all the arrangements.'
- 'Yes, Miss Morris, that is how we settled. You see, Madam has her hands full all the week, but she can spare some time for us outsiders on a Sunday. But we don't want to put her to expence in having us, so we propose to pay some little thing. Young girls like these, who are in their apprenticeship, can only give one penny a week, older ones can give twopence, or sixpence a month, so as to get the tea and sugar and buns. Madam gives up her big room to us from three to eight on Sunday; and we are to have a good instruction, a good tea, and amusements afterwards. It will be like going home on Sundays. Madam says that later she will manage to have another room for the commercial ladies, so that they can have their amusements separate from the servants: the instruction can always be to all together.'
- 'Oh, certainly; but the second room will be an advantage when we become more numerous. No

one would object to a quiet, respectable girl like you, Minnie, such a good scholar as you are, too; but many servants are very coarse, and one could not put up with them.'

Minnie sighed. Had she not suffered enough herself from the coarseness of companions!

They walked together for some distance along the streets till they reached a large plain house. They knocked at the door, and it was quickly opened by a little girl of about thirteen. Her face brightened at the sight of Minnie, and she led the way into a side-room, spacious, but scantily furnished, with a little altar at one end, where a lamp burned before a statue of Our Lady Immaculate. Two or three girls were sitting by the table, chatting pleasantly; they rose when the visitors entered. One of them showed, as she went to meet Minnie, that she was lame, and her pale face told a tale of past suffering. The other who came forward was tall and graceful; she laughed on seeing that no one recognised her, and as she held one hand out to Minnie, and the other to Miss Morris, she said:

'Have you both forgotten Ethel Rivers?'

Warm was the grasp she received on either side. The three girls came from the same neighbourhood, and had not met since the time of the Rosary classes. Ethel's parents were respectable tradespeople in Wales, and many were the kindnesses that

the poor had received from them during the long years of suffering from the failure of the iron trade. Bertha was a stranger, comparatively speaking; for though, as Minnie explained in introducing her, 'their mothers were near neighbours,' yet, Bertha's people being all Baptists, she had other companions and other teachers; but even her friends had received kindness from Mrs. Rivers. Ethel became, therefore, a popular member of the little guild from that moment.

The girls drew their chairs together, and as Bertha was the most recent arrival from the homecountry, the questions they put to her were innumerable. Her father was a gaffer, but, alas! he had no work-all the fires were out. The men at his works had never 'struck;' the master called them together, and told them he was nearly beaten by the badness of trade, but if they would take lower wages he might be able to hold on. 'The men took his proposal well, but the work gave out; only they had work and moderate means a year longer than others, and they had the peace of conscience, knowing, when their time of suffering came, that they had not brought it upon them-Minnie's people were colliers; they still had work. But Bertha's father had to take different work, and so had Eleanor Morris's. Friends had kindly busied themselves in placing the young people, and thus it was that such a number of them were able to gather round the parlour fire that Sunday afternoon.

'Madam is coming!' exclaimed little Rose O'Hanlan, who had not spoken, but was clinging close to Minnie.

All rose and put their chairs by the table, and their old friend entered, followed by a number of the girls living in the Home.

'It is like a breath of air from the Welsh hills to see you all here together, my children! she exclaimed. 'I could fancy that the hooter would soon sound, and the throbbing of the great engines begin. It would be pleasant if we could go there for our Sundays just by wishing it, and see the woods, and the rivers, and the big mountains, and the sky swept clean for Sunday! Wouldn't it be pleasant, girls?'

'The sky is clean on week-days too, now,' said Ethel, sadly. 'None of the works about us are going yet, though some have started again Abersychan way. But it would be nice if we could see the country on Sundays, certainly; still how glad we are to be here!'

'Yes, yes!' exclaimed many a voice; 'this will do very well.'

Then everyone had her little story to tell of how often she could come, and some asked leave to bring friends with them. Minnie and Ethel were to take all charge regarding the little contributions paid by the girls. They would assemble at three, amuse themselves together till four, then would be the familiar instruction, which should be called 'chats,' tea at five, amusements again, and the prayers and hymns of their guild at seven.

To-day, conversation is preferred to any other amusement; they are all making acquaintance in good earnest. Servants from town and country are there, and girls preparing for service; girls apprenticed to dressmaking and millinery, and girls out of their apprenticeship. Ethel Rivers has a situation in the Post Office; Eleanor Morris is a lady's-maid, and hopes to introduce another maid next Sunday. There are plenty of interests in common among them, and plenty of room for Christian charity and forbearance.





CHAPTER I.

FIRST COMMANDMENT.

HEN the clock struck four, the little portress entered, stirred up the fire, and lit the gas. When the windows were closed and the lights burned cheerily, all drew round the table, and Madam Margaret, commonly called 'Madam' in the Home, began her instruction.

'I told some of you during the week that we should have a good talk about the First Commandment to-day. God has given to us ten commandments, but He did not give so many to our first parents. Can anyone tell me how many they had?

- 'Only one,' replied little Rose.
- 'Then were they free to act against the other nine commandments?'

Rose said 'Yes,' then blushed, and cleared her

voice as if it had been an old 'yes' lying accidentally in her throat, and which had come out without intention.

Madam glanced around. Clare, the lame girl, replied, her thoughtful face lighting up with intelligence:

'God impressed His whole law on their hearts, though He only spoke one commandment.'

'True, Clare. Can you tell me, further, why afterwards God spoke and wrote the others?'

'Because by original sin men's hearts were blinded, and God's laws rubbed off them.'

'Clare has explained the case justly. But I have another question for the younger ones. Mary,' she said, addressing the little portress, 'why did God choose that special apple-tree?—was it because the apples were nicer than any others?'

Mary hesitated, then said, timidly:

'I think it was more to see if they would mind what they were told.'

'Quite right, Mary. Alas! you all know the result. Rose can tell me who tempted our mother Eve to this first act of disobedience.'

'The devil,' said Rose, sternly.

'Who will tell me what he had to gain by it?'

'He did get their souls from God,' said Minnie, voice and tone returning to those of her early catechism days.

'Yes, for the moment. As soon as we commit

a mortal sin our souls are separated from God—they become dead. What did the devil rob Adam and Eve of?

- 'God's grace,' said Ethel.
- 'Had this act any effect on us who are now sitting here?'
- 'Yes; it put sin on the soul of everyone born since.'
 - 'What kind of sin?'
 - 'Original sin.'
 - 'Was that a friendly act of the devil?'
- 'No, no,' said all; while one added, 'It was a bad, spiteful act.'
- 'Are we, then, to regard him as a friend or an enemy?'
 - 'An enemy.'
- 'Very well. He is an enemy to us, but what is he to God?'
 - 'An enemy,' said one.
 - 'A rebel,' said another.
 - 'A traitor,' said a third.
 - 'Why did God make man?'

There was a pause; then Minnie, true to her old devotion to catechism, said:

- 'That we may know Him, and love Him, and serve Him in this world, and be happy with Him for ever in the next.'
- 'Do we want to have people always with us if we hate them?'

'No; we want those we love very much.'

'Therefore God made man on purpose to love him, and to make him very happy in all eternity. God desired the free love and service of man, and so He gave him the power to say "yes" or "no" to His commands. The devil was driven out of heaven for saying "no," and when he saw that God had created free creatures with the power to give service or refuse service, he determined he would lead them to sav "no," and so to thwart the intention of God in creating them. And God allowed the wicked devil to do his worst, that He might get creatures worth having who would obey, though free to do the contrary. When the devil separated man from God by causing him to sin, he robbed God of the creatures He had made and loved. Thus he began at once to show himself a traitor, as Eleanor said. The devil was also God's creature, but, having rebelled against Him, he was cast out of heaven; in his spite and jealousy against man, and in his mad fury against God, he resolved that all God's creatures should share his sin and his punishment. Besides robbing Adam and Eve of God's grace at the moment, he brought the state of original sin on all their children.

'We owe all our sicknesses, all our stupidity, and all our attraction to sin to this act of the devil. Remember this well, that you may be the more watchful against his snares; for he is just

the same now as he was then, and gives all his efforts to separate our souls from God.

'Now, the First Commandment being broken, and the law written on men's hearts rendered less and less clear by sin, God gave to Moses a new code of laws—the Ten Commandments; and the first is:

"Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me. Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven thing, nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven above or in the earth beneath, nor of those things that are in the waters under the earth: thou shalt not adore them nor serve them."

'Let us suppose that we read this commandment for the first time, what should we understand that it forbids?'

'Idolatry,' said Rose.

'Certainly it forbids idolatry, as the worship of false gods; it also forbids false worship of the true God. There is a question in your eyes, Bertha—speak it out, child; we are all one family here, and need have no shyness.'

'Please, Madam, people do say to me that our prayers to the Blessed Virgin is idolatry, and that all our pictures and statues are idols. I know they are wrong, but I don't know how to explain it to them.'

'How do you know that they are wrong, Bertha?'

'Because Father Lewis said it was right to honour the Blessed Virgin and the Saints, and so it can't be wrong.'

'Well answered, Bertha. We must first accept a thing to be right because the Church teaches us, seeing that the Spirit of God dwells in the Church; afterwards we can learn the How and the Why. We cannot be astonished at the outcry of those who hear the commandments without reflecting on them. It is quite true that we are forbidden to make "graven things in the likeness of anything in heaven, or in earth, or in the sea," to adore them, and the unthinking many overlook the most important part of the injunction, the forbidden use of the graven things. I am sure that even Mary, the youngest girl here, can tell me when God gave these commandments?'

'God gave them to Moses on Mount Sinai.'

'Yes, God gave them to Moses with great solemnity, surrounding the occasion with every circumstance that could make a deep impression on the minds of men. There were lightnings and thunderings, and no one might go near the mountain on pain of death. Immediately after the Ten Commandments were given, God proceeded to dictate the form of the Tabernacle that Moses should build, and He gave minute directions how to mould the cherubims whose wings should overshadow the mercy-seat; thus at once by His command to make

graven things, God taught not only the innocence, but the usefulness of having them where He is adored. In the first Christian era also, when even Protestants acknowledge that the Church held pure doctrine, the tombs of the martyrs in the Catacombs had constantly images on them—the fish, the palm, the cross—emblems, as I will explain later, of the Incarnation and Sacrifice of Christ, and the Victory gained by those who die for the Faith. Thus God in the wilderness, and the Church in her first ages, taught the usefulness of graven things for reverence and emblematic teaching, but not for adoration. And now tell me some of the other things forbidden by this commandment?

- 'Witches,' exclaimed one; 'Dreams,' said another; 'Fortune-telling,' said a third.
- 'Please, Madam,' said Sarah, 'is it a sin to go to a conjuror?'

This question provoked a general titter, but Madame Margaret checked the merriment as she explained:

- 'I suppose you mean, is it wrong to ask a conjuror to find something out?'
- 'Yes, Madam. A neighbour of ours was robbed of seven pounds. She went to a man that is called a conjuror, and paid him half a crown, and asked him who had got her money, and how she could get it back again. He said that a woman in a

black bonnet had taken it, and if she would give him another half-crown, he would make her fetch it back again.'

- 'And she gave him the second half-crown?'
- 'Yes, as soon as she could get it.'
- 'Well, and did he make the black bonnet fetch the seven pounds?'
 - 'I have never heard that she has fetched it.'
- 'No, my dear, and you never will. That man was a cheat. Perhaps he believed himself to have the power to do such things, in which case he deceived himself as well as other people. It is wrong to have anything to do with such people. Also it is silly and superstitious to make any account of dreams, or regard them as signs of this and of that. I have seen people who ought to have known better quite depressed by a bad dream. or by a dream that they considered a sign of something bad. Remember well that all these fretting notions of signs and omens are inventions of the devil to destroy our peace of mind and fill us with groundless fears, so that we may forget our duty and the presence of our good God. But this first command teaches us that we have a very solemn duty to fulfil, as well as many harmful practices to avoid. Who can name that duty?
 - 'To adore God,' said Minnie, solemnly.
- 'Yes. And the Catechism tells us we are to adore God by faith and hope and charity—that is,

we are to believe in Him, hope in Him, and love Him with our whole heart. Let us take a day out of our common life, and see how many occasions we can find for the observance of this commandment.

'When we awake in the morning, and life and health are restored to us, we should try to give our first thought to God. God says, "They who seek Me early shall find Me." Now, is this our usual habit?'

Miss Maitland glanced round the table. She saw a calm look of satisfaction on Clare's pale face, and on Minnie's; the rest hung down their heads.

'I know young girls well,' she continued; 'have not I lived among them and loved them long enough! I enter a dormitory crying to all to rise and begin a new day. No. 1 grunts, and pulls the counterpane over her head; No. 2 mutters that the clock has not struck; Nos. 3 and 4 make no more movement than logs could do; No. 5 smiles sweetly, and says "Thank you, Madam," and goes sound asleep again. I go and shake Nos. 3 and 4, and they kick and fight as if I was a housebreaker. These girls are none of them naughty, only they have not learned good habits. Once it was my privilege to sojourn for a time among Sisters of Charity. At four o'clock in the morning a Sister entered the dormitory with a lamp, and as she entered she said, clearly but not loudly, "May Jesus live!" and every Sister awoke at once, and replied, equally clearly, "For ever in my heart!" This was a good habit. These Sisters were neither older nor better born than many of you. Their good habit was the result of careful training and of their own goodwill. It is within the reach of every one of you to give your first thought to God. Make the sign of the Cross, and say, "My God, I give Thee my heart and my life." It will be difficult for the first week or two—perhaps for a month or two—to the heavy sleepers, but you can gain the habit in a moderate time. The offering to God is an act both of faith and charity, and the next and most unpleasant duty of at once stepping out of bed is a true act of obedience, and a chance of gaining great merit.'

'Dear Madam,' said Edith, gently, 'that will be hard to do.'

'Still, dear child, it has to be done, and is done by you, and every day. Look how this can be made a means of merit, or a wasted thing. Awake and give yourself to God—is that too difficult?'

'Oh no; I have sometimes done that. I can awake, but—getting up is so disagreeable—it is so cosy to lie in bed awhile.'

'Exactly so. The devil tells you that, and the little traitor within you—the love of self-indulgence, one part of original sin—helps the devil. Having gained you over to "lie a little longer," he leads you to further evil by silly and harmful thoughts,

which lead your mind further and further from God, to whom you have just given your heart. Believe me, dear girls, you cannot do a more meritorious action in the day than the one I now urge you to-the very simple one of getting up the minute you are called. Dear Edith's "few minutes" are just like Eve's action when she parleyed with the devil. One firm step out of bed is like a soldier's preparation for battle; the devil sees it. and knows that you are a brave girl, determined to work for God, and to be no plaything of his; and our dear Lord in heaven sees, and says, "Well done, good and faithful." I had meant to go through the duties of the day in this conversation, but I feel it so extremely important to impress on you this one apparently trifling duty, that I shall stop upon this for the week, hoping that you will exercise the strength of your wills in carrying out the practice. Remember, each of you know the mind and life of one girl, whilst an old woman like me, living years amongst them, knows the heart and life of dozens; so you will believe that I am not making a mountain out of a mole-hill in urging you very strongly on this one point. Follow my advice, and in six months' time not a few of you will be able to tell me of solid results from the effort. We have now been grave long enough; I have got a new game for you, which we will play till tea is ready.'



CHAPTER II.

FIRST COMMANDMENT—continued.

N the succeeding Sunday the girls assembled punctually, although the weather was sorely against them. The fog was

so thick that they dared not venture to cross the Park, and those whose circumstances did not allow them the convenience of railway or omnibus had a laborious trudge. Our young friends Bertha, Edith, and Kate were of this number; but they were all three young converts, unfledged as yet, and very eager to learn more of the religion whose richness of resource seemed to them like poor Whittington's notion of London—a city paved with gold. As they made their way along Park Lane, they chatted eagerly; Edith, being the oldest convert, was the court of appeal to the others.

'Did the missioners tell you as much about

giving the first thought to God in the morning as Madam did? asked Bertha.

- 'Oh yes, they said a great deal about it; I think they were speaking about it in that sermon that you heard, were they not, Kate?
- 'No, it was all about mortal sin the night I was there; but I do think they said towards the end that giving the first thought to God would help to keep us out of it.'
- 'And did they tell you to jump up quick when you were called?'
- 'No, Bertha. Perhaps it doesn't come to gentlemen to think of that as it does to Madam, who has such lots of girls to look after; but it is good advice all the same.'

Bertha sighed. 'It is far the hardest thing I do. I hope Madam won't ask how often we have missed.'

- 'I don't think she will ask; I fancy she will leave it to us to tell her things. I have not missed once.'
- 'I only missed this morning, for I knew it was holiday, so I could do as I liked,' said Kate; 'but I won't do it next Sunday, for it is braver to go right through as you do, Edith. What a pity it is that Gertrude has that invitation to Greenwich to-day! She has been talking so much to you all the week that I made sure she would have come with us to-day.'

'Yes, I am sorry too; but I hope she will yet come with us. What a pity that she never went to the Mission!'

They reached the Home while talking in this manner, and on entering forgot all the external gloom, for the parlour was well lighted and the fire burned cheerily, and Minnie was talking to a young lady who sat by a piano. Both the piano and the young lady were new objects in that room.

Minnie went to meet the three work-girls with the genuinely good manners which true charity ever teaches, and she said to them:

'We old children of Madam's are very proud to-day, for we have got Miss Christine, Madam's niece. She used to learn about the Rosary along with us, and we loved her very much. She is at a finishing school now, and has a holiday to-day with her aunt. A lady has lent a piano, and we are going to have some nice singing.'

This was welcome news. Christine was about the age of the girls who now stood round her; she offered them a choice of hymns and songs, and they selected one which Minnie told them was most beautiful; it was called

'CHILDREN'S VOICES.

'On a still September day,
Passing down a quiet street,
Heard I voices far away,
Children's voices pure and sweet.

By the church's open door,
Wistfully I lingered long,
While my heart, so sad and sore
Joined the children's holy song:

"Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison."

'Comforted I went away,
Gladdened with the soothing strain
Many a night, and many a day,
I hear that melody again.
And for years to come, I know
I shall hear it evermore,
As I heard it soft and low
By the church's open door:
"Kyrie eleison,
Kyrie eleison,
Christe eleison,
Christe eleison,"

Edith had a good voice and ear, and she learned the whole time quickly. Rose and Clare and Susan and Ethel, and a dozen more, had come in while the song went on, and all learned the refrain, or rather remembered it, for it was the air of an accustomed litany. As Madam entered, Christine asked her to listen to Edith's song, and with heightened colour and a fast-beating heart, Edith sang her newly-learned solo, while all the girls joined cheerily in the chorus.

Madam was delighted, and it was arranged that they should learn another song after tea, as the best way of profiting by Christine's visit. Bertha and Kate both liked singing, and they were glad to learn something they could sing together; often, in fact, there were many candidates for the singing lessons, and Miss Maitland determined to find another teacher for them when Christine could not be had.

The instruction began on the subject of morning and night prayers.

'A very important means of adoring God is by saying prayers to Him morning and night. Every duty that we do well is a stepping-stone to the right fulfilment of another duty. The act of courageous obedience in getting up briskly when called, puts mind and body into an active state, and is a help to saying the morning prayers. know that all you girls are in a great hurry in the morning; you who are servants are wanted here, there, and everywhere; the work-girls are wanted in their work-rooms. "Bed pulls," as my old nurse used to say; our nature longs to lie still and warm. We have mastered nature by getting up, and now we want to hurry to our work: but the delay of three minutes will not injure work of any kind, just to kneel down, make the sign of the Cross. and say the "Our Father," "Hail Mary," and "I believe," with the offering of our "thoughts, words, and actions" to God. All this can be done in rather less than three minutes; and how dif-

ferently are we prepared for the day's work! It is no romantic flight of imagination to say that each day is a day of battle. The day when the battle of Waterloo was fought was a marked day, also those of Alma, Balaclava, and Inkermann; but it is an equally true fact that such days are common in the life of each one of us now talking together. We awake to what seems humdrum life; often we feel weary of its monotony. Some of you children say, "Oh dear! nothing but scrubbing, and sweeping, and dusting, and lighting fires, and washing dishes;" others say, "Stitch, stitch, stitch—oh, how tiresome!" And yet if you could see spiritual things, you would behold a great army on either side of you: the devil and his angels strong for evil; the great God and His good angels strong to protect you; and these two armies ever ready to close in deadly battle to gain your poor little soul. God never sleeps, and the devil never sleeps, and when we awake wishing it wasn't morning, two spirits begin at once to struggle. Our angel-guardian whispers, "Give the first thought to God, and thus adore Him by faith. Jump up quickly, and thus give the first action to God, and adore Him by charity. Say your prayers, and thus gain God's protection, and adore Him by hope;" and the bad spirit says, "Snoozle on, and please yourself. Life is hard. Why should you not be a fine lady, and have a fire in your room, and servants to

wait upon you? Take your ease when you can:" and so he gets you to listen, and robs you of the merit of all those acts of faith, and hope, and charity, and alienates from you the protection of God. Then comes the day—the day of battle—Nelson's cry on the day when he won the great battle of Trafalgar, and died in the arms of victory, "England expects that every man will do his duty." God ought to be more to us than England was to those brave sailors, and as we enter the work of each day's life, we should enter it with the brave thought, "This day I will do my duty; God expects it of me; God will recompense me richly for it." DUTY is a noble word; it speaks of one's relations with God; what we owe to Him as Father, as Redeemer, as Sanctifier: there is no prouder word that can be said in life or in death than "I have done my duty." You see, dear girls, we have not got one half-hour into our common day, but we have had three opportunities of doing our duty.

'We leave our bedroom and turn to work—one goes to open shutters, another to light fires, another to sweep a workroom, another to unlock presses and bring out the work; or girls go to their books, their pianos, their drawings. Many despise what they spend their time in doing, and grudge the effort, and slur over the occupation. Oh, you little spendthrifts! you are throwing away gold

and silver; you are like the prodigal, wasting your substance; the devil is laughing for joy to see your wild carelessness, throwing away, and alas! often turning into sin, what might be countless wealth to you in eternity. You had a game as children about "Picking up Gold in Tom Tiddler's Ground "-you can make it a reality in your daily life. Say, as you go off to your work, "All for Thee, my God-all for Thee." Work is tiresome, the fire won't light, the shutter sticks. and when you pull very hard, it comes suddenly and you pinch your finger in the hinge; you sweep the dust roughly, and a lot falls through the banister and alights on some one's head, who forthwith scolds you; you open the press, and take out some work-"Tiresome old dress," you say, and you pull it roughly, and crack a tacking-thread, or possibly tear the material; you upset the pins, and whisk them away to save the trouble of picking up. Any one or two of these things suffice to put you into an ill-humour, and you say words--- But I will not touch on rash words to-day; I will only speak of the ill-humour, the dreary feeling of everything being hard and disagreeable, and your lot being a very unpleasant one. Now look at the waste of God's gold, look how you are throwing away your fortune. Two angels stand beside you. One, bright as the rising sun, his countenance beaming with love; one, dark, and spiteful, and

cruel. The good angel gathers in his hands all that you do for God-the dear First Thought, the courageous uprising, the devout prayer, the fire lighted "all for Thee, my God;" the press opened "all for Thee;" the stitches, one, two, three, four, on to thousands and millions, all golden offerings to God; the grace at meals, the very eating, "all for Thee;" the patience under reproof, the courage in taking out work badly done, the kindnesses to companions, the fortitude under pain and weariness-so that the good servant or the good workgirl gladdens her angel-guardian by furnishing him a whole basketful of golden gleanings. The Last Thought at night fills up the measure. "Father. into Thy hands I commend my spirit;" and, as sleep steals over the weary girl, a day well spent sheds peace over her spirit—she is nobler than any high-born lady in the land who has lived for self, for she has the proud distinction of the approved soldier, called, and chosen, and faithful; and the happy angel-guardian ascends to God to deposit in His heavenly treasury the good actions of that day, there to wait ever-increasing till God's judgment is spoken, and the soul hears her award-"Thou hast been faithful over few things, I make thee ruler over many things; enter into the joy of thy Lord."

'But there is another angel who busies himself in your affairs, clever, persevering, and cruel. He is the devil's servant, and he occupies himself in tempting you to sin, or in robbing you of your graces. He tries to get you to be lazy and self-indulgent, he puts bad thoughts into your heads, he throws bothering little things in your way to get you to be impatient and selfish, or to tell untruths or be dishonest. And he collects your faults all day as diligently as the good angel collects your virtues; he never reminds you of them again, but he keeps them all stored up against you till the terrible day of God's judgment, when he shows them all to the dread Judge, hoping to ensure your ruin.'

'And will God take notice of what he says, Madam?' asked Edith, anxiously.

'Every fault that we are sorry for and confess is washed away for ever. Our sins and faults are written against us night by night in the Book of God, but each time that we go to confession with real sorrow for our sins, the whole page is washed clean, not only of the sins we have confessed, but of those that we have forgotten. But just as a dishonest tradesman neglects to cross out the things we have bought on credit when we pay the bill, so the devil, out of sheer malice, does not erase the sins we get pardoned, but keeps them all against us to terrify us with, and often he makes poor souls very miserable and nearly drives them to despair by reminding them of past sins and persuading them for one reason or another that

they are not forgiven. It is the trade of the devil and all his bad angels to deceive and to lie, but he cannot deceive God; and no sin will be brought against us at that dread judgment that has been pardoned in confession. If there is anything that you have not understood, and wish explained, tell me, children. You know we are here at home, and you cannot speak too freely.'

'I don't understand,' said Kate, 'how God can need charity, for everything is His.'

'The Catholic Church uses the word charity in a different sense to that in which Protestants use it. With them it means gifts to the needy, or, as it is generally called, "relief." This kind of charity the great God certainly does not need. We mean love when we use the word charity. St. Paul used it also in this sense when he said, "Though I give all my goods to feed the poor and offer my body to be burned, and have not charity, I am nothing." Charity towards God is love and obedience. Almsgiving is only one part of charity towards our neighbour. To speak kindly of our neighbour, to desire his good, and help him to serve God, are greater acts of charity than to feed him when he is hungry. Almsgiving got the name of charity in a roundabout way. We obey whom we love, and love is charity, and charity is love. Therefore acts of obedience are acts of charity to God. The love of God and the love of our neighbour are united

together. St. John says, "If a man love God, he will love his brother also." The highest point of charity to God is to be united to Him, and this is the eternal joy of heaven. We give alms to our neighbour when our heart meets his in his sorrows, and thus we are in a degree united to Him; this is the way almsgiving came to be called charity. Charity is the only one of the theological virtues that will last through eternity. Faith is believing that which we do not see. In heaven we shall see God; so faith will be at an end. Hope is to expect what we do not see; but when we have got the longed-for prize, hope is at an end. But love or charity goes on increasing; the more we see God and know Him, the more we love Him; so the very atmosphere of heaven is charity. We make acts of charity towards God when we adore Him, when we pray to Him, when we do things to please Him. This First Commandment treats principally of adoring God; this we do in all the ways that I have explained to you, and also in a way greater than them all put together by hearing Mass. The noblest adoration that man can give to God, is by offering to Him His divine Son, as a pure, holy, and most noble sacrifice, and this we each of us do every time that we assist at Mass. I only mention this very simply now, as the crowning act of adoration to God. We will study the amazing mystery of the Mass more fully another day.

Your attention has been sufficiently exercised now, and I shall leave the rest of the time till tea at your own disposal.'

- 'But you will stay with us!' cried several voices.
- 'Oh yes, certainly! I am your property these Sunday afternoons. Come and chat with me, or with one another, as you best like.'
- 'Please, Madam, will you not first tell us about the emblems, the palm, the fish, the cross, which you spoke of?'
- 'Our good mother, the Church, knowing how likely we are to be taken up by what we see and hear all day long, furnishes us with certain material aids, to remind us by our senses of things eternal. It is for this that we have statues and pictures, medals, crucifixes, and relics. Just as a child looks with affection on the portrait of her deceased mother, and calls to mind all her sweet ways, kissing the picture, and often letting her tears fall on it; so we, looking on the statue or picture of the Mother of God or of the Saints. occupy our minds with their virtues, and ask them to intercede with God to procure us what we need. The Crucifix is the greatest of these aids; as we gaze on it we call to mind all that Jesus suffered on our behalf, and make acts of contrition for the sins that tortured Him and of love for His heroic sacrifice. In no case do we adore any of these

things. We kneel to God; the sight of the statue or picture sets us praying, and we pray to God either directly or by the intercession of the Saint. Relics are good for the same purpose. persons have been healed of grievous maladies by having applied to the part affected handkerchiefs that had touched the bodies of the Apostles, and up to the present day it pleases God at times to do such honour to His faithful servants as to work miracles on their tombs, or by the touch of their relics. You see God is quite different from man. He loves His children so dearly, that He occupies His wisdom in contriving joys for them; and when one is very faithful and suffers much for God, He rewards him by letting him share with Himself the glorious work of saving souls. Thus he gave to His Immaculate and sorely-afflicted Mother to be the Mother of His Church, so that as long as time lasts, she may be working with Him at redeeming mankind. A degree of the same favour He gave to St. Peter, in making him Prince of His Church. He gave it to various Saints in each century; recently in our own time to the Curé d'Ars and others. It is not that their help is needed to eke out the work of Christ as Protestants try to believe that we teach, but it is the act of God's almighty generosity that He rewards His servants by accepting their co-operation. is an emblem of the Incarnation, the Greek letters

of which the word is composed meaning God a Saviour; the palm an emblem of the martyr's victory. Now what else do you wish to ask?'

Kate and Edith were at her side immediately.

- 'Kate wants to speak to you, Madam; she is in some trouble.'
 - 'What is it, my dear child?'
- 'Mother has written me such a cross letter; she says I am as good as dead to her along of being a Catholic, and, worse than that, she has written to the mistress to complain of the girls not being better looked after; this has made her cross too and all the three of us have had a very miserable week. Another girl, Gertrude—such a nice girl—was meaning to come with us to-day, but Mrs. Steele invited her to go with her to Greenwich just to get her away from us.'
- 'These things are trying, my dears, but you will be very much astonished when I say that I think they are pieces of good luck for you. You are only a few weeks in the Church, and already Our Lord is so condescending as to give you a little bit of His Cross to carry. Think what an honour it is for girls so young and of so little importance in the world, to share even a burden with the only Son of God! Did you answer your mother's letter, Kate?'
- 'I tried to, Madam, but I cried so I couldn't write. It is so cruel of mother to be so hard! I shall tell her that she will kill me.'

- 'My dear Kate, try to put yourself in your mother's place. Does she know anything of the Catholic religion?'
- 'Oh no, Madam. Before I came to Mrs. Steele's we were always in the Church school, and the clergyman used to tell us, both in school and church, that the Catholics did such bad things; that they made believe that we should go to Purgatory, in order to get us to give the priests money for pardoning sins; that every sin cost something to pardon it, like things in a shop, and that by paying beforehand we could do them cheaper; and he said they prayed to images and not to God, and that they were all sure of going to hell worse than the heathen.'
 - 'And you believed all that?'
- 'Oh yes, I never thought of anything else till Edith was converted; and when I saw what she did, and what a nice girl she was, I began to ask her things, and so I learnt that it was all lies the parson had told us. Strange that a man so well learned as he should not know better!'
 - 'And your mother still believes it all?'
- 'Yes, every word, and she ought not to, for I told her it was all lies; but she says the parson is bound to know a lot better than me, who am at my sewing all day, and she is almost out of her mind. Is it not too bad?'
 - 'Suppose your eldest sister had come to London

and turned Catholic, and you had stayed at home, what would you have thought of her?

Kate smiled. 'I should have been as mad against her as mother is against me, and I should have said it was real impudent to set up her ideas against our clergyman. Yes, Madam, I see mother can't help it.'

'No, my child; I pity your mother very much, and you must be very gentle and loving to her. Write and say that the Catholic religion teaches you to be very dutiful to your parents, and that you have never thought so much of all you owe to her as you have done since your conversion. Tell her that you are very sorry indeed for the pain you are giving her, and that you will try to make it up to her by being more obedient and affectionate than ever before. She lives near London—ask her to come up and see you as soon as she can.'

'Yes, Madam, I will. Edith will help me to make a nice letter—won't you, Edith? I hadn't thought of how bad it must look to poor mother.'

'And, dear Kate, pray often for your mother, and get your friends to pray for her. You three girls have the honour of Our Lord to care for in your work-room; pray earnestly for His grace. Accordingly as you do credit to your holy faith or the reverse, you will get others to join or to avoid you. I see Nora wants me, so I will go her way now.'

Please, dear Madam, come into this corner; my fellow-servant, Ellen Graham, has come with me, and here is Jane Pearson, whom you have not seen before. They want a bit of encouragement, for they have a great deal to try them.'

Madam Margaret seated herself in the centre of the group, and inquired into the grievance. Fellowservants had been disagreeable; they had gone with poor Jane to Benediction, and had ridiculed all they saw, and poor Jane was so disappointed, for she thought that if once they came into the presence of the Blessed Sacrament they would surely be converted. Ellen, on the other hand, was only half converted herself; she was shocked at the people who could ridicule the Blessed Sacrament, but she could not understand why it should not please God just as well if they went to church in the evening as in the morning. Madam sympathised with the first, and exhorted her to take courage, and bear bravely the sneers as all the Saints had done before her; and she promised more ample explanations to the latter, only impressing on her for the moment that the Church holds the relation of a mother to us, and that a mother desires exact obedience of her children, especially in early childhood: later she may explain her reasons, but at first they must do just what they are bid, because mother says so.



CHAPTER III.

SECOND COMMANDMENT.

HE succeeding week was a thoroughly unlucky one. A new cook came to the Home; she had a good will, and she

began very zealously to teach the girls under her. The housekeeper was pleased and reported well of her, and Frances exerted herself still more. The third day the cook urged the girls on too fast; they got excited and nervous. Mary carried up a tray in such a hurry that as she reached the door her foot slipped, and the supper was thrown forward into the room, the hot milk flowing over her hands and up her sleeves, and the poor child cried out that she was badly 'scalded.' Agnes cut her hand severely the same evening, and when some one blamed Louisa for pushing past Agnes when she was cutting the bread, Louisa flew into a passion and called

her accuser a story-teller, and tried to strike her with an umbrella. Frances declared that they were the most aggravating girls she had ever seen, and she would rather do all the work herself than be bothered with them, and the kitchen was in revolt.

The weather was dark and damp; the French work-mistress had a series of sick headaches, and the work-girls had hard times. They were foolish enough to whisper to one another that they wished their former mistress was back again, and the discontent increased. The work was ill done: they were kept at work during the recreation hour as a penance, and headaches and bad tempers prevailed on every side. It was no better in the house where Bertha and her friends worked. weather was depressing, and the mistresses irritable: strong language was used, and one high-spirited girl answered so boldly that she got dismissed. Minnie and her companions suffered in a similar way, and when all the girls met the following Sunday they began to pour out their grievances to one another.

'Only to think,' said Bertha, 'our mademoiselle called us all *devils*; yes, and once she said *dirty devils*—was it not horrid?'

'Our mademoiselle makes use of the word devil,' said Clare, 'but I don't think she means anything bad. Foreigners don't seem to think devils such bad things as we do. She will call us devils when she is quite in good humour, and be paying us a

compliment at the same time. One day, when Charlotte had made a body very well, she said she was "a smart little devil."

'Oh, but our mademoiselle meant spite when she called us so! She is a bad tempered creature! It is so shocking in her, for she is a Catholic; no wonder our girls disrespect Catholics.'

'It is a pity,' said Clare, gently, 'but I do think still it is more a habit than a mark of bad temper. I dare say no one taught her to watch her words when she was young; it is our good teaching which makes us so careful.'

'Yes, there is something in that. I am not always as particular as I ought to be, I know; still I would call no one a devil.'

'It is not an English way of speaking. It is just as bad if we accuse people of things such as the devil does. I mean, if we call them liar, or thief, or such words.'

'Is that as bad? It does not sound so wicked. But, oh, Clare, it has been a nasty week! I have adored God very little by my actions this week; on the contrary, I have been cross and impatient and spiteful, and all sorts of bad things.'

'Poor Bertha! it would have been wise if you had gone to confession last night, and had your mind relieved of it all, so as to begin fresh to-day.'

'I thought of that, Clare, but I couldn't do it. I had a bit of a quarrel with Kate in the week,

and I said a very cross word to her. Kate said, "You will be sorry for that on Saturday, when you go to confession," and I said I wouldn't go at all on Saturday; so you see I couldn't.'

'Oh, Bertha, how silly! You were wrong to say that rash thing, and still more wrong to stick to it. It makes you so uncomfortable always keeping the sin on your mind, and you are much more likely to lose your temper again while you keep up the reserve. Pray don't wait any longer than you can help.'

'But surely, Clare, having said I wouldn't go, I was bound to keep my word?'

'I don't think so at all; a foolish or rash promise is better broken than kept. But see, here is Madam; let us ask her.'

Madam Margaret reflected seriously before she replied.

'Whether or no you should keep a rash promise depends principally whether your neighbour's good is involved in it. In the case you tell me of, no injury could be done to anyone by your breaking the promise; and as it was a wrong resolution, you could not be too quick in breaking it. But supposing that you had rashly promised some benefit to your neighbour, and afterwards found that you had better not have done so, you would be bound to make your word good, or arrange with him to do something else instead.'

'I made friends with Kate afterwards, so no wrong is done to her.'

'No; the only wrong is to your own soul. I hope you will remedy this as soon as ever you can.'

'I promise you I will. Here is some one wanting you, Madam.'

'It is Frances, our new cook. What do you want, child?'

'May I teach the girls to sing "The Good Old Catholic Times?"

'By all means teach it to them. Only wait till after instruction, for it is nearly the time to begin it. Are all your children here?'

'Yes, Madam; but I've had horse-work to get them to clean up and dress in time. I have promised them each a rosary if they would do all I set them, but I had to help them besides.'

Madam took her seat at the table, and rang her little bell as a summons to the girls to arrange themselves, which they promptly did. She then began her lesson.

Second Commandment: 'Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain.'

'To-day's commandment addresses the most unruly of all our members, the tongue. St. James says it is "a world of iniquity, and setteth on fire all nature, and is set on fire by hell." Great numbers are now in hell because of the wickedness of their tongues; great numbers are lingering in purgatory, who might now be singing to God's glory in heaven, because of the faults of their tongue. It frightens me to think of the guilt you and I incur so lightly. May God inspire us with a wholesome fear, so that we may learn habitually to watch over our tongue!

'The Catechism tells us that this commandment forbids all rash, unjust, and unnecessary oaths. Sometimes people must take oaths. We are called on to vow to God, to make solemn promises to Him; that is as virtuous an act as an unjust oath is criminal. Also if called as a witness we must take an oath solemnly, in God's presence. to speak the truth, and as solemnly fulfil the yow. But it is very wrong when people are excited to promise by "the God of Heaven" that they will do this or that. We should try never to make any promise under excitement; even if made they should not be carried out, unless the breaking of them should be injurious to our neighbour. The great faults which are first forbidden in this commandment are swearing and cursing. People swear through impatience, and they swear through anger; the former is less sinful than the latter, but it is sinful. Calling on God lightly as a mere exclamation, surely that is a kind of taking God's Name in vain. I remember being terribly grieved and alarmed in a Retreat by a sermon on venial sin, in which the priest maintained that even those who are trying

to give their lives to God, sin hundreds of times each day. In thinking the subject out, I came to the conviction that a great proportion of these sins are sins of the tongue. First, there is the false swearing, which we are, thank God, seldom tempted to do; then there is the angry swearing, calling God and the Saints to witness, and calling the neighbour by grievous and hurtful names, as devil, or thief, or liar; then there is the cruel curse, which we hear from people who are infuriated or drunk-alas! too often are such words to be heard on Bank holidays !-wishing evil to the neighbour who has offended, cursing his head, his limbs, his children-even wishing him dead or in hell. These curses are very shocking and wicked, and offend God sorely. All evil wishes spoken in malice are of the nature of curses. I remember hearing another priest tell how grievous effects he had found to follow upon curses, especially the curse of a parent. All curses are invitations to the devil to work with you, and they give him great power. Passionate dispositions are most in danger of sinning in this way; therefore all of us who know that we have hot tempers must be very guarded, and pray much for grace to control our tongue. When we are angry the devil suggests the bitter word, and then we seize it, and out it comes. This irritates the person we have a difference with, and hot words are given in return; it may go on

for long, and get hotter and hotter; and the sins at first venial may intensify to mortal ones, or rather be followed by mortal sins, as the temper gets more enraged. How many have to grieve in preparing for confession over numbers of such sins! how many wait wearily in purgatory on account of them! how many, alas! are excluded for ever from the presence of God for such! I have never yet heard of anyone grieving for not having said an angry word! You have a question to put, Bertha—speak, my dear.'

'Is it a sin to call people "devils," and aggravate them, and say they are conceited, and call them paupers?'

'Of course it is. But the sort of sin can only be known by carefully noting the circumstances and the intention. If such things are said in malice to vex and pain others, it is a sin against charity, greater or less according to the provocation given. It is not a sin, but an act of charity to tell people of their faults, especially if they are under your charge. Those who are teaching are bound to reprove for bad work or inattention; they must try to do so in a manner to give the least pain and most profit, speaking in private at first; but if people will not correct themselves by private remonstrance, they must have the mortification of being corrected before their companions: this is for their good, and not as a satisfaction to the

irritated teacher. Even if a person thus irritated speaks a little intemperately, we must not judge her harshly, for her duty required her to speak with some severity, and that she went too far will only be counted a venial sin. I say only, but I use that word simply to mark the distance between venial and mortal-venial meriting temporal punishment, mortal eternal. But I would not have you regard venial sin lightly; it also is terrible both in its malice and its results. Venial sin is of two kinds-deliberate and undeliberate. Deliberate venial sins are beloved of the devil, and hated of God. For instance, if an evil desire presents itself: say you are going out to a party of your friends, some ribbon is lying on the work-table—a yard tied in your hair will make a great improvement in your appearance. You say to yourself, "It ain't a sin to take a vard of ribbon "-you mean, "It is not a mortal sin," and you are right. But it is a sin that grieves God; you know it to be a fault, yet you choose to do it rather than be less smart than other girls. That is a deliberate venial sin. The same way with the tongue. You know something against your neighbour-possibly she was expelled from school-no one else knows it. She vexes you -ah! you can pay her well-you throw at her the fact; you know she is mortified and infuriated. But it was not a mortal sin to say that a girl was expelled from her school-no; but you spoke

knowing that it was displeasing to God, so to aggravate her; it was a deliberate venial sin. Again, two or three of you are annoyed by a mistress who has tormented you, and you arrange a plan for paying her out. You put something nasty in her soup, or you write her a teasing letter just to put her in a rage. Your consciences tell you you are doing wrong, but you persevere just because you are determined to be even with her. Mind it is not the greatness of the offence that makes the sin so malicious; it is its deliberateness: the same thing done by an ignorant person would be of no moment. God is the best and most pitiful of Fathers. He looks mercifully upon our faults, forgiving them by thousands as parents do to little children "who know no better;" but neither God nor an earthly parent can love a child who would say, "I will disobey you just as far as I can with safety to myself. You have promised me a thrashing if I take a pound out of your purse; but you will only deprive me of my fruit after dinner if I take under that sum. Well. I will take nineteen shillings and elevenpence-halfpenny, for I don't care for hurting your feelings, only for getting punished."

'In examining the sinfulness of angry words, we must take a distinct line. When judging ourselves we must be very strict; but very lenient in judging our neighbour, and this for two reasons. 1st. We

are pretty sure not to be too hard on ourselves, and if we were too hard it would be no sin; and the harder we are on ourselves, the more hope of avoiding the fault in future. 2nd. As regards our neighbour we do not know how great were his temptations; how many aggravating things had already happened to put him past his patience before he came across us; how far his state of health and natural character may be an excuse for him; and if we judge him rashly we incur a new fault ourselves.

'A very terrible way of sinning against this commandment is by blasphemy. Blasphemy is to speak against God; to say that He is cruel, or unjust, or to speak of Him with irreverence, and make a mock of Him. To sneer or scoff at holy things—the Church, the Saints—anything belonging to God—this is also a kind of blasphemy. The anger of God falls severely on those who thus defy Him; many have been struck dead with the blasphemy in their mouth; and eternal punishment is distinctly threatened in Holy Scripture to such offenders.

'As the greatest safeguard against this class of faults, next to the grace of God comes the habit of self-control. It is very tiresome at first to watch one's tongue and to check the angry word or the bad wish when one is sorely tempted to speak; but every time such evil desire is checked, we gain

merit before God. He smiles on us, and sends us more grace; a blow is struck against the tempter and he is weakened, and a good habit is begun of self-control which will go on gaining strength by every victory, and become a blessed treasure to us, saving us from innumerable venial sins and many mortal ones, shortening our purgatory by years and years, and gaining a great recompense in heaven. I cannot urge you too strongly to face all weariness, to overcome all disgust, in forming this good habit; it will be a spiritual fortune to you; a very great help in your dealings with men, and a treasury of merit in the sight of God.'

Frances interposed.

'But our tongues are surely of some use; if not, we had better have been born dumb.',

'Most certainly they are of use. St. James says, "Therewith we bless God, and therewith we curse man. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing or cursing. These things ought not to be." We can glorify God by singing His praises, by instructing the ignorant, by consoling the afflicted, and by cheering and amusing the sick and infirm. But all these services will be easily rendered after the tongue's faults have been subdued: it is difficult to do good by the tongue till we have ceased to do evil. Now, Frances, go and teach your companions the pretty hymn you spoke of; we will get up a nice concert one of these days. Only, cul-

tivate well the habit of controlling the tongue first.'

Frances produced her hymn, which met with universal approbation. She had a sweet voice and good ear, and the tune pleased as much as the words:

'Now join the hearty chorus, while we sing our homely rhymes,

And you shall hear how things went on in good old Catholic times,

When England was a happy land, her sons were brave and free,

And innocence kept company with mirth and jollity.

Chorus.

'And thus they passed a happy time, as everyone doth know,

When our old Catholic fathers lived a long time ago.

'They loved their faith, they loved their king, they loved their country too;

Their hands were good for anything, their hearts were warm and true,

They dearly loved their pleasant land, its statutes and its laws.

Right glad to fight for England's rights, and bleed for England's laws.

Chorus-- 'And thus they passed, etc.

'And when they heard the Angelus ring high o'er hill and dale.

The blacksmith stopped his hammer, and the thresher stopped his flail;

They doffed their caps and crossed themselves, with meek and pious care,

And never thought the minutes lost they spent in earnest prayer.

Chorus-'And thus they passed, etc.

' Full well the homeless wanderer knew he'd not have long to wait,

If he could but contrive to reach the nearest convent gate:

The traveller there was welcomed with kind and courteous glee,

And cheerful monks performed the rites of hospitality.

*Chorus - And thus they passed, etc.

Anl happy, both for high and low, will be the moment when

We see in merry England those times come back again; And if we try to live the lives our fathers lived of yore, We may hope to see old England what England was before.

Chorus.

'And then we'll pass a glorious time, as everyone shall know,

As when our Catholic fathers lived a long time ago.'





CHAPTER IV.

THIRD COMMANDMENT.

N

N the following Sunday Frances managed to be in the parlour before any of the girls came excepting Minnie, whose busi-

ness it was to arrange many things for the rest.

She at once assailed Minnie with questions.

'Do you know why Madam gave the instruction about sins of the tongue the very first Sunday of my being here?'

Minnie was astonished at this question, but replied with Irish readiness:

- 'Perhaps your angel-guardian put her up to do so, knowing it to be what you wanted.'
- 'I believe some one has been telling Madam stories against me.'
- 'Not likely. But maybe your own conscience has something to say.'

'Minnie, I am very miserable. I adore Madam, and she takes no notice of me. Didn't you see that when I began to question about anything, she soon turned the subject?'

'She answered you quite kindly first. But naturally she would not let you have more to say

than other people.'

'I am sure she has taken a dislike to me. I have a good mind to go back and be a Protestant again.'

- 'For shame, Frances! how dare you be so wicked! Don't you know that God might take you at your word and withdraw from you the gift of faith?'
- 'I believe He has done it. I was so anxious to be early here to talk to you that I shirked going to Mass this morning, and I have felt like a demon ever since.'

'Frances, you frighten me—it was a mortal sin! Do tell Madam, and hear what she will advise you. But, hark! there are the girls at the door. Don't let on to them how bad you have been, for it might do them harm.'

The three girls from Regent Street came in immediately, and began to ask Minnie and Frances what success they had had in the first week's efforts towards the good habit. Minnie blushed, and owned very frankly that she had caught herself up a great many times just as she was 'break-

ing out.' Frances said nothing, but looked odd. Ethel and some of the older ones entered, and Clara came in and most of the Home girls; and they told tales of themselves and each other which were very diverting. The housekeeper had found two of the kitchen girls most good-humouredly discussing the points of a quarrel they had stopped short in, and she told them two stories which they had now the pleasure of passing on to their friends. A Billingsgate squabble was going on, and all the most horrid language that the devil could supply was in use. One of the women had a good memory, and she heard her eldest child learning a grammar lesson the night before. In her wild rage she had exhausted every wicked word that she could remember, when suddenly another term came to her mind. She shook her fist in her adversary's face, exclaiming, 'Not another word will I waste on you, for you are a-noun substantive!' with that she walked away, leaving the ' noun substantive' dumb with rage.

The other story was that of a spoiled child of fortune. He had toys of every sort, and books by dozens; one book was a particular favourite—it was called 'The Green Boy.' The story was of a meddlesome lad who put his nose into everything; and at last meddling with a pot of paint, the irate owner thereof painted him green, and green he remained ever after. One day the spoiled child was

in a passion with his aunt, and wished to call her the most provoking name he could find, so after much stuttering, he exclaimed: 'You are—are a green boy!'

Those who had made the most progress talked the least about it. Frances spoke no more, but she shot strange looks at the girls as they told of their efforts. Madam Margaret opened the instruction by reading the Third Commandment: 'Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-day.' She then asked the girls to give her their idea of sanctifying or keeping holy the Sabbath.

'At home they go twice or three times to church, and read pious books, and talk a great deal in a solemn voice, and have very good dinners, and jam to tea, and go to bed very early,' said Elsie Cameron, a little convert from Scotland.

'At the clergyman's house, where my sister is parlour-maid,' said Kate, 'they go twice to church and twice to school, and walk in the garden and have a cold dinner; they don't read much, but they go to bed early.'

'Our clergyman said we hadn't got to play on Sundays, nor to go visiting, but we might take a walk, or we might sing. He didn't say anything about eating or going to bed; but then it was in church he spoke to us, and they don't put such things in sermons.'

'Bad boys go rabbit-hunting on Sundays in the

country, or dog fighting, and they don't go to church, and that is real wicked, isn't it, Madam?

'The good God gives us the Sunday that we may rest from our daily business, and study and adore Him. He rested on the seventh day Himself after He had worked for six days, and He wishes us to do the same.'

'Then we ought not to light fires or cook the dinner, or do anything at all!' Frances interrupted almost fiercely.

Madam looked astonished; she spoke very gently in return, and directed her remarks to Frances. 'The Jews thought as you do, my child, and many of the Dissenters take the same line. Our Blessed Lord used a parable to correct their extreme notions. He said that if our ox or our ass should fall into a pit on the Sabbath-day we ought to pull them out, and much more to do any possible acts of kindness and necessity for one another. Work in a house should be so arranged that only what is absolutely necessary should be done; and opportunity should be given to everyone to hear Mass, and to hear or read about the salvation of their souls. By what some of you have just said, you see there are various opinions announced by teachers of religion; we are naturally anxious to know which is the right one. In this we are not left in doubt.

'Jesus Christ came down from heaven-made

Himself subject to all our pains, poverty, labour, weariness, and sorrow—preached—worked miracles -gave instructions-and finally died a cruel death, and rose from the dead to teach mankind a sure way of returning to God, as well as to bear for them the penalty of sin. Before He went back to His Father in heaven, He established a teaching power; He gave to His Apostles authority to teach, and conferred on them the Spirit of Wisdom to fill them with all needful knowledge; and He gave them the command to bequeath this power to their successors, the bishops and priests of the Holy Catholic Church. Thus our dear Lord saves us from all painful doubting as to which is the right way of pleasing Him; we have only to ask at the Fount of Truth, and by the grace of God's Spirit our priests will tell us what is His holy will. What we seek now to know is how we shall satisfy the law of God in the observance of the Sabbath. The Catechism expresses in few words the answer of the Church: "We must hear Mass, and rest from servile work;" and, further on, it qualifies the latter precept by saying that such rest is to allow us "time and opportunity for prayer, going to the Sacraments, hearing instruction, and reading good books." Thus we see that the necessary servile work that is required in families, so that all may have free hearts to serve God, will not hinder the divine intention of keeping the day holy, so that time

enough remain for the uses I have mentioned. According to the plan of hours for Sunday written up in the kitchen, you had time for Mass in the morning, Frances, and from three o'clock there was no more work required of you; you are hearing instructions now, and later you can spend a couple of hours in prayer and reading.'

'I don't want either to pray or read; I didn't hear Mass. I am wicked, and all the rest of you are saints.' Frances shot a defiant glance at Minnie as she said this.

'You had the opportunity of hearing Mass, had you not?' asked Madam.

'Yes; the housekeeper told me to go, but I hid myself and cleaned the brasses.'

'Then the sin is entirely your own. Did you know that to hear Mass is one of the laws of the Church, and to miss Mass on Sunday by your own fault is mortal sin?'

'I know that.'

'And do you know what is God's sentence on those who die in mortal sin?'

Frances nodded.

'My poor child, how I pity you! Your state gives me more sorrow than I should feel if one of you was suddenly seized with dangerous illness. We will all pray very earnestly to God to give you contrition and pardon.'

'Why don't you order me out of the house?'

'On the contrary, the Good Shepherd left the sheep that were safe in the fold, and went away to the mountains to seek the one that was lost. He teaches me to care more for you at present than for all the rest.'

Frances laid her head down on the table, and began to sob. She was sitting by Madam, so she could easily touch her. She laid her hand on her shoulder and said, gently:

'You shall come to me when the girls have gone, and we will go together to Father Harrington, and then you will be happy again. Sit quiet now while the instruction is given.'

'The great duty of the Sabbath is to hear Mass. What then is the Mass?'

'It is the unbloody Sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ,' replied Minnie.

'You remember that as soon as Adam and Eve had sinned, God taught them to offer Sacrifice, thus instructing them and all their descendants, as by an "object lesson," that sin can only be atoned by blood-shedding. Abraham, Noe, the patriarchs, the prophets and kings, all had the same necessity; all must gain pardon by confessing their sins and shedding the blood of some innocent creature—a lamb most frequently. This came very prominently forward in the institution of the Passover. A good healthy lamb was to be killed, the blood sprinkled on the door-posts, the flesh eaten. When

the destroying angel came to kill the first-born, in punishment for Pharaoh's defiance of Almighty God, he entered into no house where he saw the blood. It was at the time of the commemoration of this great Jewish feast that our Blessed Lord instituted the Mass. All the sacrifices offered from the time of Adam till then had been pictures beforehand of the Sacrifice He should offer; all had pointed to Him, and all the sins that had been forgiven had been atoned by His blood, of which that of the lambs and calves had been but the outward sign. He told His disciples that He had an intense desire to eat this Passover with them before His death; He procured the lamb according to the law, and He eat it with them. Thus He wound up the system of typical sacrifice on the eve of His own perfect and sufficient oblation of His divine life. Then after offering the last sacrifice according to the old law, He took the elements thenceforth to be offered, performed the miracle that He would perpetuate to the end of time, turning that bread and wine into His own body and blood, and giving it to His disciples for food. Thus He initiated the new Sacrifice, the unbloody one, which the prophets had foretold should be offered "a pure sacrifice from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof."

'All that Jesus Christ did on earth He did as an example, as a teaching. He said to His disciples, "Do whatever you have seen me do," and He endowed them with the power to do it. Therefore can our priests perform the same miracle by the power of Christ; and each time they say Mass they bring Jesus down from heaven, and He lies there on the altar helpless, and by His marvellous love He allows Himself to be handled and consumed, and all because of His intense longing to live in our hearts and possess Himself of our love. Mass is a prayer in action—the supreme prayer that man can use—supreme because divine: it is truly offering the Sacrifice of Christ to His Eternal Father.

'In all ages mankind has been divinely taught to regard sacrifice as the highest kind of prayer; it was so with the Jews, who were the then Church of God. The pagans learned the notion, and applied it to their false religion. When the persecutions arose against the early Christians, they suffered martyrdom by hundreds rather than offer sacrifice to idols; and in those days it was a mortal sin to cat of things offered to idols, just as it is the most sacred of duties to eat of and so become united with the unbloody Sacrifice—the Blessed Sacrament.

'Many of us who had not the grace of being born Catholics can remember how strange the worship of the Mass seemed to us. The prayers, either silent or in an unknown tongue; the people, attentive we knew not to what; genuflections and prostrations and bells ringing—it was all a puzzle.

'There are many ways of hearing Mass, and the Church allows her children to choose what suits The very presence at Mass is a prayer. them best. God is there in the Mass. First, the priest is acting the part of Christ, who Himself is the unseen but real Sacrificer. He is the great High Priest after the order of Melchisedech, of which all the priests of the Jewish law were but types and foreshadowings. Bishop Vaughan says: "He yearned for the accomplishment of the Sacrifice. On the eve of His death, as Legislator and Priest, He instituted for all time, and offered, the unbloody Sacrifice of the Mass, and then He forthwith went out to offer the same Sacrifice of Himself in a bloody manner on the Cross! There now exists therefore but One Priest, One Victim, One Sacrifice, One Altar." You know what it is to stand proxy for another person at a baptism. The proxy answers and makes the vows in place of another person whose will he expresses. We may say that the priest who says Mass is the proxy of Jesus Christ; but with this addition, that he speaks in Christ's name in the presence of Christ. It was not so in the Jewish sacrifices; the priest there was the representative the type, the figure of Christ. But in the Sacrifice of the New Dispensation, the unbloody Sacrifice of the altar, Christ Jesus Himself is the Offerer only. He wills not to appear in outward form there: He ordains that a mortal priest speaks, prays, consecrates, uplifts and consumes the Victim Christ, using the hands and voice of the priest, but Himself being the real Sacrificer. In all other sacrifices the efficacy of the offering depends to a great extent on the worthiness of the priest sacrificing, but the Mass continues of infinite value even if said by a priest in mortal sin. Such a priest incurs heavy penalty from God for so acting, but the Sacrifice is just as efficacious. The reason of this is because our Blessed Lord is the real Priest as well as the real Victim.

'Thus when we hear Mass we need simply to unite our intention with this our great High Priest, and forthwith He prays for us, He offers Himself for the pardon of our sins, He merits for us more and more graces, and He thanks God for and with us for all that we have already received.

'By far the most important act in one day or in one week is our attendance at Mass. All our other prayers are weak and full of imperfection; our prayers at Mass are absorbed into Christ's prayer of Sacrifice, and go up to God perfect and well-pleasing in His sight. All our good works contain in them more to pardon than to praise; but offered to God in union with the Sacrifice of the Mass, they partake of its fulness and are accepted with it. We get more perfect contrition in confessing our sins at Mass, and are prepared for better attendance on the Sacrament of Penance. We are

cold and grudging in our gratitude to God for His mercies both to our bodies and our souls; but when we unite our poor thanks with the Sacrifice of the Mass and offer it to God, our gratitude becomes holy and full of pure love, and He accepts it as a worthy return for His mercies.

'We might compare Holy Mass to the Koh-i-nor, that wonderful diamond worth thousands and thousands of pounds. If you had spoiled a lady's dress in the making, or upset the Christmas pudding into the fire, or broken a plate-glass window, or set fire to a painting of great beauty, and went to the person you had injured to ask pardon, you might be met with harsh words or threats; but suppose you took the Koh-i-nor in your hand and said, "This has been given to me, and I will give it you to atone for the injury I have done you, how quickly would you obtain pardon and favour!"

'Thus, if we want help from God for a friend who is sick or sorry; for our own succour in need; for strength to overcome any evil habit; for perseverance in good resolutions; for the conversion of those in sin, or for any other grace of God—our best plan is to offer Him the Koh-i-nor, the most blessed Body and Blood of His divine Son, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The best help we can get for the souls of the departed of those we have loved on earth, and whom our love can no onger benefit, is to get a Mass said for them. We

give an alms to the priest for saying Mass, but it is not to buy the Mass; but that we may deny ourselves, and make an offering to God in the person of the priest. God has been pleased to allow many signs and visions of the acceptableness of this act of love to our departed ones.'

'Please, Madam, do tell us some of the signs,' said Clare.

'I will gladly do so. There was a poor workgirl in Paris, an orphan. It was a bad seasonfood was dear, and work was scarce. Poor Marie had only one franc left, and no work by which to earn more. She reflected anxiously how best to spend it; she had only a piece of bread in the cupboard—no other food. She put on her bonnet and went out to the parish church, and she went to the sacristy, presented her franc, and asked one of the priests to say a Mass for the souls in Purgatory. "Is it for your father, or your mother, or for whom, my child?" he asked. "For whatever soul God pleases," poor Marie replied, and she went into the church. She united herself with the Great High Priest, and though saying her beads all the time, she prayed God to befriend her in her straits and find her the means of living, and she thanked Him lovingly for all His past mercies. It was only seven o'clock when she got home, for you know the Masses begin very very early in France. About noon came a servant in gay livery asking if a work-girl called Marie lived there. The portress called Marie, and he gave her the message. A grand lady-a duchess-living in a palace desired Marie to go to her immediately. Marie went as quickly as possible. The lady looked pale and sorrowful; she had passed the night in suffering, and had not fallen asleep till dawn. She then had a dream, and in it she saw her beloved son who had died some months before. He said, "A poor work-girl called Marie has had a Mass said just now which has released my soul from Purgatory: give her plenty of work, and pay her well for love of me," and he disappeared. From that day Marie had as much work as she could do, and she never let a week pass without having a Mass offered for the Holy Souls.

'But it is fully as profitable for all of us to be diligent in our own attendance at Mass, as to get Masses said for the dead. I have read of lives saved by the hearing of one Mass. Three wicked men, thieves, were going to make a journey on a Holiday of Obligation, but one of them who feared God, though too often daring to offend Him, said, "I won't start on my journey till I have heard Mass." The others ridiculed this, and said they cared nothing for the Mass, and they started forthwith. They had to cross a river, in doing which both were drowned. People tried to save them, and did get them out of the water, but life

had gone. The third man started after hearing Mass; he arrived at the river, and behold the dead bodies of his friends lay on the bank. You can imagine how he was struck with awe, and it is to be hoped that he amended his life.

'There was also a similar case where one out of three had heard Mass, and when they were afterwards in the forest they heard the voice of a demon saving, "We will kill them;" and another said, "We can't kill that one on account of his Mass." And the two were struck by lightning, and the third left uninjured. The terrible sins of men provoke the anger of God as much now as in the days when He sent fire from heaven to burn up the Cities of the Plain; but His anger is constantly appeased by the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass which is being continually offered. There is no hour of the day or night when Mass is not being said somewhere. From six to eleven a.m. Mass is being said all over England and Europe; from ten a.m. till evening it is being said over North and South America; from four o'clock till midnight it is being said in Australia, New Zealand, and China; and from midnight to six p.m. in India, Palestine, and Asia Minor; so that there is no hour of the day or night but the Holy Sacrifice is being offered, and God glorified upon the earth of His creation.

'We must give great diligence to hear Mass, so as to draw its full blessing on our souls. The

Catechism says we are to hear it with "great attention and devotion," that is with head and heart, with intelligence and affection. We must take pains to understand the Mass, to follow the prayers so as to be able to join in with the priest. Think well of the Four Ends of Sacrifice so well defined in the Catechism. First to honour and adore God in offering to Him a Sacrifice of priceless value; secondly, offering the same Sacrifice in thanksgiving for all His mercies—creation, preservation, redemption, sanctification, pardon, grace, and the hope of glory; thirdly, to increase contrition by beholding the price our sins have cost, and to implore pardon; fourthly, to obtain all graces and blessings for ourselves and all dear to us.

'I would advise all converts to follow the prayers of the Mass very closely till they get quite familiar with them; and by looking at the priest one can see at once which part of the Mass he is saying. Then they can change, and take another method so much recommended by the Blessed Leonard. From the beginning of Mass to the Gospel to occupy yourselves with acts of confession and contrition, begging God's pardon for the past, and seeking a more perfect contrition for all your sins. Take thanksgiving as your duty from the Gospel to the Consecration, enumerating to yourselves the mercies of God, and trying to urge yourselves to a fuller appreciation of them. Then with the Elevation

begin to adore God, worship and praise Him, humble yourselves at His feet, and adore His perfections. Make a spiritual communion when you are not able to make an actual one, adore the human nature of our Lord, and beg of Him all the graces for yourselves and for others that you would ask if Jesus was sitting in your house with you as He did with Martha, and Mary, and Lazarus.

'One great mark of reverence to Holy Mass is to go neatly dressed, not in finery, but very simply, like modest, quiet girls, desiring to attract no attention but from the Holy Jesus Himself.

'The other duties of the Sabbath, prayer, reading, and to get instruction, can be properly attended to at any hour, only we have to take care not to omit them. Mother Church allows at other times plenty of innocent recreation: we may walk or play, see our friends, and amuse ourselves in all that is not sin. You may now begin your singing, and if possible perfect yourselves in what you began to learn on former afternoons. I hope to have Christine here next Sunday, and she says she has a pretty new song to teach you.'





CHAPTER V.

FOURTH COMMANDMENT.

FRANCES became quite reasonable when Madam spoke with her alone. She expected that the directress would make a great scene and arouse all her excitability; she was greatly astonished, therefore, when she made her sit down beside her, and said quietly:

- 'I see, Frances, you are one of those characters who delight in making a fuss, and drawing a great deal of attention on yourself. You probably meant to be dismissed on the spot, to throw yourself on your knees, to implore pardon, that half the girls might weep and intercede for you, and the rest say, "Let her go, Madam; she is too wicked."
 - 'How can you see into my thoughts?'
- 'I do not see into them. But I have known so many young girls, that I very seldom see a new

kind. Yours is a character liable to bring itself into great danger. I would most strongly urge you to try to be simple.'

'I thought you would be begging me to repent of my sin.'

'I certainly wish you to do that. But your sin is partly the result of ignorance. I see that you are only half-instructed, and ignorant converts cannot understand the rigour of obligations. You felt you were doing a bold and daring trick, which would astonish us all very much; but you did not take into your mind the fact that you were saying to God, "I will amuse myself by defying you."

'No, indeed I did not.'

'In any case you must go to confession. But be sure to pray to God to enable you to be simple and truthful. Say that you wanted to make a fuss and get up a scene; don't pretend to stormy passions and temptations that your imagination loves to conjure up. Try to manage your work so as to attend all the evening classes of Christian doctrine in the Home, for thorough instruction is very necessary for you. Do pray and strive to be truthful.'

'I assure you, Madam, I would not tell a lie to save my life.'

'Probably not, Frances; but you would tell a good many to get up a scene. Let me assure you, my dear child, that that sort of thing will not answer here. You will never frighten me; but you may make yourself very disagreeable, and oblige me to send you away for the peace of the household.'

Frances retired thoroughly subdued. It did not cure her of her love of the sensational all at once; but it struck the first blow. She saw that she had lost the respect of her companions, rather than made herself an object of interest; and the excuse of ignorance that her mistress made for her mortified her sorely, though she could not deny its truth. She had valuable qualities—industry, activity, devotion—and by degrees they triumphed over the disordered imagination. On the following Sunday she was eager for the instruction, but the sound of her voice was not heard.

'Honour thy father and thy mother' was the subject of the day.

'The simple meaning of this commandment you all understand at first sight, but, like all the words of God, it penetrates more deeply, and extends more widely than we can have any idea of till we reflect prayerfully on it.

'The very plain injunction is to be obedient and respectful to parents. Most children have affection for their parents; only the neglected children of misery who are brought up in sin are in danger of heartlessness to parents, and none of you belong to that pitiable class; but affection is one thing and

honour another. A child loves its parent because she nurses it, cares for it, often spoils it, keeps it safe, and makes it happy. But how many children obey their parents? How many treat them with due respect? It sets my teeth on edge to hear boys, and even girls, call their father 'governor,' and speak of both parents as if they were poor creatures and very ignorant, but must be put up with to a certain extent, though very often in the way. Look at the life of the Blessed Virgin in her childhood's home, how docile she was to every command of her parents, how ready for every little service, how sweet the tone in which she replied when called. Look at our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, working with St. Joseph as hard as any of us can need to work. No doubt the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph often asked Him to do things against His inclination, yet always He was subject to His parents. I know girls belonging to our Home—I won't say whether they are here now or not-girls with good warm hearts, whom I have seen making great sacrifices for their parents, vet would answer so roughly, and show such bad will in little things. "Why can't someone else do it?" "Oh dear, it makes me sick to do this!" "Always wanting me to do something; I wish I was dead!"

'Young people, and indeed people of all ages, are so apt to think that life is ennobled, and heaven gained by great things—great acts of devotion, great services to parents, or to the poor-acts of effective heroism, whereas life is made up, and character is formed and heaven is gained, by hundreds and hundreds of little acts-trifling things of which people say "What does it signify?" massive rocks and even mountain ranges are all built up of little wee shells that contained tiny creatures, who lived and died hundreds of years ago. I will show you a bit through a magnifying glass, so that you may understand it well. My dears, our souls are called "temples of God"-"houses built for God," so Holy Scripture describes them, and they are made up of millions and millions of little acts. which our good or evil angel collects daily to carry to God. It is seldom that we have the chance of doing great things, of saving a person's life, of converting a soul, etc.; but every day we have the opportunity of doing a hundred little things, each one of value in the sight of God. Little services to parents—the fetching of water, any errand, mending a torn garment, reading to, or amusing them if sick or aged, helping them with the younger children, praying for them if absent, praying or hearing Mass for them, or getting a Mass said for them if dead-all these things God loves. You here in the Home, or you who live in other houses of business away from your parents, can do many a noble act unknown to any, by mending your clothes, so as to make them last longer, and save your parents from having more to buy; thus you can make a meritorious act of mending your stockings, and your gloves; also you can take care of the old things to make for the small brothers and sisters, and thus without cost get a parcel together that will give great pleasure at home. Above all speak kindly and respectfully both to and of your parents; serve them willingly, gladden their hearts by kind letters, and control your tempers in dealing with them.

'This commandment is the great foundation of all authority. The Apostle St. Paul gives strong injunctions to obey kings, magistrates, and masters, as well as parents; and alas, the devil strives with great success to hinder obedience to any of them. Almighty God is the author of all paternity. He makes the relationship of fathers and children, kings and subjects, masters and servants. The devil lifted his proud head in heaven, and cried: "I will not serve." He was cast headlong out of heaven, and hell was made for him, and he spends all his energies, as long as he is free to act, in persuading men to act like him, and refuse submission to God, and to those to whom God delegates authority. You will say that I have long ears when I tell you how many things I have heard and seen among my beloved children in the Home, that have shown me that Satan is at work with them. urging them to join his war-cry, "I will not serve."

If I have had to punish for disobedience, either to the rules of our director, or to my own orders, it was not for love of him, or of my own dignity, but because all authority is of God, and we who bear it must answer to Him for it. I hear murmurs against our state in life. I hear work-girls say: "Why must I work, and Miss So-and-so go visiting and amusing herself? I am sick of work." Sometimes this has been said to me, and I have been able to reason it out with the murmurer, but often I have thought it better to seem not to hear. My own dear children, God our Almighty Father chose the state of each one of us; He allotted our work in life, and made each of us just able for what He He loves each of us far more than destined us. our small understanding can take in. He respects us—the angels respect us, each as we are, as much as if we were kings and queens. I don't want to humiliate my work-girls, and my little servants; I want them to respect themselves by respecting their state. I have known a little servant throw her cap on the ground and trample on it, calling it a "badge of slavery." Little goose, the devil chuckled to see the silly and false pride in her head, and her angelguardian was sorry, for he loved the little cap, and the little girl, and knew that a beautiful bright home in heaven was to be the reward of her faithful work.

'If only I could thoroughly convince you all of

the fact that every state ordained by God has its own honour, worthy of all respect on earth, and rich in the means of gaining heaven, surely you would begin to be content with the will of God. Servants growing up in the presence of God, accepting their office from His holy hands, would make of that office a little apostolate. Time would fail me to tell of the souls that can be saved, that have been saved, by good God-fearing, God-loving servants. From the time that the little Israelitish maid taught the great general Naaman and his household to worship the true God up to this very day, servants are glorifying God and winning souls. Last year a very powerful Protestant convert was brought to ask for instructions in the faith, because she had remarked the good conduct and sure trust of a poor Irish servant in the house. respectable women in service have come to me asking for instructions, because they have seen the faith of Catholic fellow-servants. Without ever trying to advise or meddle either with their superiors or their equals, Catholic servants find countless chances of working for souls. Nurses have grand opportunities of influencing children. Employers turn sick, then a good Catholic gains great graces by tending them; death may come quickly, clergymen may be distant; a Catholic servant may say the act of contrition, and a master or mistress repeat it after her, and that

soul may escape perdition by that very act. And in the truest sense we are all servants, and right proud we are of our service; we wear our livery concealed in little scapulars, but that is to save it from irreverence, not because we are ashamed of it. We were proud enough, we who had the grace to join the grand pilgrimage to Paray-le-Monial, to wear our badges through the streets of Paris, as well as in the little town where the pilgrims were fellow-citizens. I grant you it is more acceptable to our feelings to wear God's livery than man's, but when we wear man's for God's sake there is not much difference. St. Paul says of the first Christians, "He that is called being free is Christ's servant, and he that is called as a slave is Christ's freeman." The servant-class have given many saints to God's Church. Mother Margaret of the Dominicans was once a little servant girl, and continued till middle life in service. Another servant had the grace to save the Blessed Sacrament from dishonour, and to convert whole families to the Faith. Do you think that God and the holy angels despise the cap of a servant when such graces are granted to them?

'I would have you all set out in life as recruits in the army of God; the gift of faith is God's shilling. You know a recruit becomes one of the Queen's army by accepting a shilling bearing her image. Here we all are, then: God has given us faith; it is the image, the stamp of our King. We are His soldiers. He says to some, "Wear this can and fight My battles in the kitchen, in the house, in the nursery, by the sick-bed, in sorrow and in joy. Whatever you do for master or mistress, child or guest, you do for Me;" and that band goes forth accompanied by glad angels, honourable as long as To others the King says, "Go and work faithful. with your hands, sew, read, learn. As attendants on distinguished ladies, as workers in houses of business, as assistants in shops, go, here is My shilling, kiss it, love it, and do it honour; go, fight My battles in shops, workrooms and warehouses; draw vour swords against dishonesty, bad language and all impurity; gain souls to Me by the praise your diligence and honesty and modesty shall bring:" and off goes that band accompanied by their angels, joyous and content. God's honour is committed to them, and they enter on an honourable service. The King says again to others, "Take My shilling, the gift of faith; henceforth you are My soldiers. Go and fit yourselves by study to fight My battles. In your classes resist sloth and self-indulgence by moderation and a pure life; keep your intelligence bright. After you have learnt your drill you shall go and fight for Me in school-rooms, patiently instilling truth in all you teach." These go to a harder warfare than either of the others, more sensitive by nature and more easily wounded; but their angel-guardians are content, for the soldiers of Christ must be ready both to do and to suffer, and the dear God gives abundant graces to all.

'The good Christian servant soon finds herself The devil has been so successful of late beloved. in sowing his own wicked spirit of false freedom in the human heart, that comparatively few servants are worth having. As when one buys a quantity of potatoes all having the same wholesome appearance, but as soon as the cook begins to prepare them for table she finds many of them diseased, so it is with servants. We hire a sensible-looking woman, but soon you find that she is ashamed of being a servant, and wishes people to think her a shopwoman-bah! There is the canker; that potato is not safe for food. God has called her to be a servant, and instead of striving to be a servant, dear in His sight, her heart revolts against His will; it is the old war-cry that empties heaven and fills hell. "I will not serve." In these days we know how to value good servants, for alas! they are scarce, and if I can influence you here around me to give your hearts to God, and for love of Him to love your employers and be faithful, I promise you that both you and I shall be well loved and respected.

'My own dear children, I do not need to tell you in words how dearly I love you all, for your hearts know it. 'As I look around on your bright young faces, I see in you a band of little apostles that may go forth into the world in one or two or three years glorifying God, saving souls, and increasing your own sanctification at every step you make. Or, if you let the devil deceive you, you may swell the ranks of his army, and spread the spirit of revolt against God, and all whom He has ordained to rule.

'There is a means of obeying this commandment which I shall astonish you by naming. That means is good manners. When your mistresses reprove you for bluntness and awkwardness, it is not because they wish the world to say, "What genteel girls those are at St. Anne's Home!" but, "How well those children of St. Anne's know what is due to others!" The tone of respect and deference required of you in addressing your elders or those in a higher position, reflects credit on yourselves, and wins you respect, and what is far best of all, it pleases God. I never was more pleased than when a lady said to me, "I shall be indeed sorry when there are no more work-room girls to be had, for there is a gentleness about them one meets with so seldom." That day I thanked God for so teaching my children. People are blunt and rude and sheepish because they think about themselves; when we occupy ourselves in cares for our neighbour and forget ourselves, we practise true politeness.

'There is a fatherhood next in holiness to the paternity of God, and sharing its character, and that is the divine authority of God's Church, our Holy Mother. Obedience to bishops and confessors is at once the easiest and the most sanctifying obedience, and the best protection from the devil's spirit of revolt. To this fatherhood the rich and the poor are alike subject, and as long as the king's shilling is bright, the soldier bows to that authority. Be regular in your confessions, and quite simple in your accusations of self, and then if even the devil ensnares you for a time with his spirit of revolt, you will receive grace to return to the true allegiance, the only real honour that neither time nor eternity can tarnish.

'And here I must warn you against some favourite snares of the devil. Our priests are truly fathers to our souls; they care for, they watch over, and sympathise with each one in their charge. Often a Protestant's first attraction to Holy Church is by seeing the kindness and truly fatherly interest a priest takes in a poor girl or a poor boy. The devil takes note of this, and he tempts the children of the Church to two abuses. First he leads warm hearts on to a too material affection for their priest. "Dear Father So-and-so" is a word ever on their lips—his appearance, his voice, his goodness, are constantly under discussion. You know how often I have said to you,

"Love your priests, but do not talk about them. They are God's own, and the love that they merit is a very reverent love. When your grateful hearts want to say all kinds of flattering things about a priest, shut your mouth, and in your heart say a Hail Mary for him; that will do him real good. while praising him loudly will only bring ridicule both on him and on yourself. The devil's next snare is to get people to speak disrespectfully of priests, and this is ever a sign that the king's shilling is getting dull and tarnished. pick holes in priests when they want an excuse to neglect the sacraments. All that regards priests is dangerous ground-make the sign of the Cross when you find yourselves obliged to speak about them; they are consecrated to God; their hands touch Jesus Christ whenever they say Mass or give Holy Communion; they carry Jesus Christ in their breast when they give the viaticum to the sick. Beware how you give either profane affection or profane censure to such: sin is very near, and if you injure a priest, you commit a grievous sin. When you hear gossip about a priest, you hear the language the devil loves. Do not join in it; do not listen; do not reply. For such things, God brings men to judgment.'

When the instruction was over, the girls turned eagerly to Christine to ask for the promised song. Christine was not only ready, but eager to comply.

'Do come and learn it quickly,' she said, 'for auntie is called away and can't be free again till after tea, and I want to see her face when we sing her the song, for I know that it will just suit her. See, I have written out a good many copies, so if two of you will look over together, all can be learning the words and the tune at the same time.

'THE TWO FLIES.

'Two flies went out once on a time
In search of pleasure, and change of clime,
For they didn't care for father or mother,
Uncle, or aunt, or sister, or brother.
So off they flew, and burst away,
In the merry month of May.
But they too saucy were by half,
I can't sing if you do laugh.

Chorus.

'Shut your mouth and listen to me,
None are so blind as those who won't see.
Take a lesson from a fly,
And don't give way to luxury.

'So off they flew, and never did stop,
Till they came to a butcher's shop.
"Ah!" said Old Bluebottle, "here's a treat,
I'm particularly fond of butcher's meat."
Then said Old Greeny, "Off I'll go,
Such things don't suit for me, you know."
For he too saucy was by half,
I can't sing if you do laugh.

Chorus-'Shut your mouth,' etc.

'So off he flew, and ne'er did stop
Till he came to a grocer's shop,
And there he played such wonderful rigs
Among the prunes, the plums, and the figs.
At length he took a fantastical whim,
In the treacle-pot to take a swim.
And as soon as he thought it in he goes,
Without even waiting to take off his clothes.

Chorus-'Shut your mouth,' etc.

When Bluebottle passed the grocer's door,
He heard a voice he'd heard before,
And when beside the place he'd got,
He perch'd on the top of the treacle-pot.
There he found Greeny almost dead,
And unto him Old Bluebottle said:
"Greeny, all the powers won't save ye,
Ye'd better have stuck to the meat and the gravy."

Chorus-'Shut your mouth,' etc.

MORAL.

- 'Now all ye young ladies, inclined to roam, Take my advice and stay at home, And be your fortune dry or not, Be content with what you have got. About little trifles don't make a fuss, You may go farther and fare worse. And when very far from home you've got, Like the fly in the treacle-pot, You'll find the world too thick by half. I can't sing if you do laugh.
 - 'Shut your mouth and listen to me,
 None are so blind as they that won't see.
 Take a lesson from a fly,
 And don't give way to luxury.'

As soon as tea was over, all assembled round the piano, and the song was sung with great spirit. Madam's delight satisfied her niece's warmest expectations, and she asked triumphantly:

'Now, auntie, was I not right? this song is just to your taste.'

'Perfectly so, my dear; and the children will hear of the "Two Flies" many a time. When I see you spending all your week's money on sweets, I shall whisper, "Take a lesson from a fly." When a deputation comes to plead that the bread is cut too thick and the butter is spread too thin—when it is represented that such and such a girl can't eat rabbit, and that such another does not like rice-pudding, etc., I shall say:

"About little trifles don't make a fuss, You may go farther and fare worse."

Oh yes! this new song will be a real treasure to me—work-girls, governesses, all will be admonished by it. It will be a treasure in the Home.'

'Don't you wish you had known it last summer, Madam, when we lost two of the girls, and found them at the refreshment-stall eating ices?'

Madam laughed. 'Yes, that would have been a happy moment to have buzzed in their ear, "Don't give way to luxury." I remember when I was a young girl such as Bertha, certainly not more than seventeen, I took a very severe view of life and its

duties, and I formed strong resolutions never to spend thought or money on procuring any pleasure in eating. That was all very well, for I was old enough to begin to deny myself; but I went too fast, for I began to try my theories on my little niece, a child of four years old, and I explained to her that it would be a great fault in her if she spent pennies in sweets instead of giving them to the poor. My eldest sister, who was ten years older than myself, thought me a little goose, and loved to play me tricks. She had taken the small Fanny out for a walk, and passing a pastry-cook's shop she gave the child a penny, and told her to go and buy herself some toffy. The little creature hesitated and said, "But Aunt Margaret says it is so selfish." "Never mind Aunt Margaret," said my sister, "go and get the sweets." The child entered the shop. The good woman who kept the shop had known us all from little children, and she began to talk to "Little Miss Fanny," and said. "You are the very image of your mamma, missy. I knowed her when she was just as little as you," and she weighed out the sweets very slowly. In the meanwhile I came along, basket in hand, carrying a little tea and sugar to a sick woman. My sister seized my arm, and putting a penny in my hand, she said, "Go and buy a fresh bun for old Betty; it will make her such a nice tea." Right gladly I took the penny, and entered the shop. The door opened with a spring, and the spring rang a bell. Fanny turned at the sound, and the moment she saw me she threw down her penny, and leaving the toffy on the counter, she ran as if pursued by a mad bull. I had no notion of the trick played. I took Betty's bun and Fanny's sweets, and on leaving the shop I found my sister in a fit of uncontrollable laughter, and Fanny hiding her face in her dress. "Take me home," she cried; "I can't face Aunt Margaret; she will think me so selfish."

'I fear you think us all sadly selfish,' said little Rose, 'for we nearly always spend part of our Saturday pennies on sweets; but some go to buy flowers for the altar, and some are saved for our little ones.'

'My dear Rose, a great number of years have passed over my head since that time, and every year I have learned to make more and more allowance for such trifling faults as these. I am glad when the pennies go to "little ones at home," or to God's altar; but I sympathise in every innocent pleasure that my children have, even to sucking sweets.'





CHAPTER VI.

FIFTH COMMANDMENT.

Agnes had opened the door to several of the girls. When Ethel came, she stopped to speak to her, for she had taken a great liking for the little maid, and she asked her how she liked the instructions.

- 'I shall like the one to-day, for it is about murder, and so it won't shame me. Somehow there always seems a bit in all the others that has fit me, and made me sorry, but I am quite sure that I never did kill anyone, nor try even to hurt them.'
 - 'That is right, Agnes; then you feel quite safe?'
- 'Yes, quite; but I guess Frances and Lizzie are not as safe, only I must not tell tales;' and she shut her mouth quite tight.
 - 'What is the matter with Frances?' asked

Minnie, as Frances took her seat without greeting anyone.

Agnes and Rose both laughed, but did not reply, and Minnie saw that her question had been indiscreet.

Eleanor came in soon, and then Bertha, Edith, Kate, and a fourth girl, about the same age, but taller than any of the party, whom they introduced as Gertrude. When they had been a little time in the room, they went and spoke to Frances. 'Goodmorning, young ladies,' was Frances's curt reply; and she shut her mouth with a snap, as if she would say, 'I won't talk for anything that you could give me.'

They begged the other girls to sing 'The Two Flies' for Gertrude. Frances was a particularly good singer; but though all the others were singing, she kept her lips closed. The girls were more and more puzzled.

Lizzie and Alice came in shyly; they were the two little maids from the kitchen. Rose and Agnes watched them narrowly; they went as far off Frances as they could, and Minnie gave them some of the copies of 'The Two Flies' to learn.

When Madam came in Frances did not move; she was very fond in general of listening when her mistress was talking, but on this occasion she kept carefully in the background. Gertrude was introduced, and the other girls drew a little aside,

that the stranger might have the most attention. When the instruction began, all drew their chairs round the big table; they had to sit very close indeed, now that the numbers were larger. Frances got the place farthest from the Directress.

'Our subject for to-day is the fifth commandment, "Thou shalt not kill." You all look me very brightly in the face, for you are quite sure that you have not killed anybody.'

- 'I never killed anything but flies,' said Rose.
 - 'I killed a mouse once,' said another.
- 'And I a bird, but I did it by accident,' said a third.
- 'Very well that you are all acquitted of the grossest act against the fifth commandment—wilful murder. But that is not all that it forbids; tell me from the Catechism what else is included?'

'Fighting, quarrelling, and injurious words,' said Edith; and the Home girls all cast down their eyes.

'Yes, children, fighting amongst girls is a thing that so rarely happens, that it is scarcely necessary to speak about it. Passion sometimes leads people to do it, but everyone is heartily ashamed as soon as the passion is off. But I am sorry to say that quarrelling is far from uncommon. People begin with some very trifling thing—generally self-love is a little wounded; one girl says the other looks a guy with her hair turned back; the one who has tried the new style of hair-dressing is of opinion

that it suits her extremely well, so she tells the other that she is a guy herself, and her hair looks frightful in whatever style it is dressed. No. 2 retorts that the barber round the corner said she had splendid hair, and if she only used plenty of his oil, it would in time reach to her feet; and No. 1 says she is telling lies, whereupon passion gets hot, and they accuse each other of every fault under the sun, and, oh dear, oh dear! charity to God and man is broken into a thousand pieces. have gone into one of the work-rooms on a summer morning, and felt as if a November frost, wet and chill, seized on my nerves. Beyond the simple act of courtesy in wishing me good-morning, no one would look at anything but their work, and they stitched as if they wished to hurt and punish their sewing. And the fact was that every girl was in a bad humour because one had said that she had had more Christmas cards given her than any of the others. It was just as they came up from breakfast that the word was spoken. No. 2 said it was like No. 1's conceit; No. 3 was of opinion that people must be hard up how to get rid of their Christmas cards; No. 4 wondered that some one hadn't given her an album to keep them in; No. 5 said she should like to see them, insinuating that it was an exaggeration; No. 6 said out bluntly, "What a cram!" The mistress rang her signal for silence. and each retired into herself; having broken one of

God's commandments to launch it at her neighbour, she set to work in a thoroughly bad humour, and began to consider it hard that she should be a work-girl, while many another daughter of Eve, no better than herself, was driving about in her carriage. And I have seen one girl at a time sitting apart idle because she was so offended at another girl having work given before her, that she was saucy to the mistress, and was punished by enforced idleness. These faults have two causes—selfishness, and the want of self-control; they are cured by constant and persevering mortification of self, and by a habit of guarding one's words.'

'Didn't you say also, Madam,' said Bertha, 'that a habit of self-control would save us from breaking the second commandment?'

'Certainly it does. The more we can gain the power over ourselves the less frequent will be our venial sins. This power is of enormous importance to us, both for this world and the world to come. It prevents us from annoying our neighbour, and by degrees all around us turn to us with trust and confidence, knowing that we shall give way to no sudden irritability or excitement, and shall therefore be able to counsel them prudently. In trade it is most useful; where people live by pleasing others, whether in making dresses or selling in shops, self-control is absolutely necessary. Custo-

mers find fault unreasonably, want impossible things, and have little or no consideration for those they deal with; but all must be borne with an equable manner, and the voice must be continually gentle and respectful, or the customer complains, and the girl loses her place. This seems hard, but look how our dear Lord softens its pain, and rewards the effort far beyond our deserts; by doing all with a view to pleasing Him, He counts every act of patience and self-control as an act of great merit in His sight, and our good angel gathers up such acts of ours through the long and tedious day as if they were pearls and diamonds, and carries them up to heaven at night to place in that treasury of God where all that is done for Jesus is touched with and united to His merits, and becomes gold of the sanctuary. Servants need selfcontrol just in the same way as commercial people need it-governesses more than any. To everyone of you the acquirement of this power will be a fortune in life and after death; but you must acquire it as you acquire learning or any trade, by long and patient application. You have a Divine "When He was reviled He reviled not again." No word, much less act of impatience, ever came out of His mouth. "He suffered and threatened not," and when dying under torture He prayed even for His malicious enemies: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what

they do." People may treat you with contempt, and human nature is ever ready to return the scorn, but bear it for Christ's sake, as He bore the insults heaped upon Him, and you win respect thereby and His love as well.

'Anger is forbidden in this commandment, yet there is an anger that is not sinful. The apostle says, "Be angry and sin not." Those who bear rule are obliged to be angry against sin. I dare say some of you remember the day when your dinner was badly cooked, and one girl, who I know is not here now, began the evil example of spoiling all the meat. Others followed, and several pounds of meat were wasted, when, had it all been left untouched, it could have been properly cooked for the next day. When this meat was shown to me I was very angry, and I was obliged to be so. With people starving all around us, it was a wicked thing to waste meat. I waited for some hours before I went to you. I felt obliged to correct you, lest you should repeat the fault, but it cost me far more pain to do so than it would have cost you to eat the meat. When I did go to you I only spoke two sentences, but I know that you never forgot them. All anger that comes of excitement is evil; generally it is stirred up by self-love, as we have already seen. Left unresisted and unrepented, it goes on to hatred and revenge, which are the real sources of murder. If we have the misfortune to take a dislike to anyone, we are bound to be extra careful in all our words and acts regarding him. Unless we watch and pray to God, too, to keep us from injustice, we shall judge rashly all that that man says and does; we shall so dislike his acts, that by degrees we shall come to hate him, and then we shall be ready to act with malice towards him, and may commit spiritual murder a hundred times, so as to be even more guilty than the man who takes one life.

'But there is a bright reverse of this sad class of crime—that of saving life and benefiting our neighbour, best of all that of saving souls. Here again comes another view of the great profit of self-control and gentleness: many a soul is saved by the gentleness of governess, work-girl, or We can all name converts who have been won to seek entrance to the Church of God by the sweetness of their fellow-servants and apprentices. Some may have had the happiness of saving a life; that is often the reward of patience in nursing a sick person. I will tell you a story of how my mother saved a life when she was a girl like you. My mother, then a young girl, lived with her father and mother in one of those beautiful Yorkshire valleys, where the swift-flowing streams make grand waterfalls, and are utilised for turning mill-wheels. My grandfather was the proprietor of a cotton-mill; it was four miles from

a town, and the valley in which it was situated was called the Crag Valley. The town of Halifax was full of such mills, and my great-uncle was a doctor there; his son assisting in his practice, and being also an officer in the militia. At the time I speak of all the cotton was made in what were called hand-looms, and nearly all the population worked at them. A very clever man invented steam-looms, by means of which the cotton could be made much quicker and more cheaply: by a careful calculation he showed that by the steam-looms so much more trade could be done that the hands thrown out of work by leaving off the hand-looms could be employed in other parts of the manufacture. This was well understood by my grandfather and all the educated people, but the men would not believe it. A workman called Lud arose, and began to give lectures and excite the people. He told them that they and their families must necessarily starve, and he frightened them into resistance. Terrible riots arose, and many murders were committed. Halifax masters who had got the steam-looms were shot in their own houses, and no one dared go out after dark. The riots were so frightful that a new clause was introduced in the Litany of the Church of England, "From Hull, Hell, and Halifax, good Lord deliver us." These rioters were called Luddites, from the name of their leader.

'My grandfather called his workpeople together,

and explained to them how the case stood. He said that it was necessary for his business that he should have steam-looms like the other manufacturers, otherwise they would carry all the trade from him; and he promised them that not one of them should lose his work, that he would find other employment for all the spare hands. One of the older men replied to him that they would trust him for all that, having found him to be a just master for so many years, and they would stick to him, but that they were obliged to join the union, or else the other men would take revenge on them. This was all they said to my grandfather.

'Whilst this meeting was going on, my mother was sitting beside a sick woman. The husband came in, and the woman asked him anxiously, "Bill, thee haven't gone again the measter?" "No, lass," replied the husband, "the measter and this here good wench have got fast hold on all our hearts. She's teached our little uns to read, and to sew, and to sing like t' birds, and the missus has minded the sick and the sorry, and it wouldn't be nat'ral like to go against any on 'cm. I'm even minded to tell miss here, about t' union, if she'll promise to hodd her tongue."

"I will promise," said my mother.

"Aye, and ye'll keep yer promise, honey," said the old man, "or it's murder that will come on 't, for if 't leaders o' the union kenned that I'd telled ye ought, there'd be a bullet through my head afore I could say Bill Reynolds."

'My mother renewed her promise of solemn secrecy.

- "Well, then, miss, this is how it is. All on us hands have wrote our names that we'll hodd together, and take vengeance on such as is in the Condemned List, and purtect such as is in the Purtection List. Now mind what I says—the Condemned List means 'Marked for murder,' the Purtection List means 'Mind how ye touch a hair o' their heads.' You and the measter and the missus is on the Purtection List, us lads ha' got ye put there; but yer uncle and cousin in Halifax is on t'other."
- "Bill, my good friend, you must save uncle and Harry," cried my mother, earnestly.
- "And d'ye think I wouldn't save 'em if I could? Why, lass, ye're fond. It wad cost my life to try. I've telled ye 'cause ye can save 'em, and ne'er another."
 - "Oh, Bill, how can I save them?"
- "Stop 'em of going out in t' dark. Now gang yer ways, for maybe there be spies, watching how long ye talk with Bill Reynolds."
 - 'My mother went to my grandfather.
- "Father," she said, "I must take my pony and ride to Halifax this very hour; I have urgent business with uncle."

"Impossible, my child," he replied; "you can't go alone, and I have no one to send with you. Besides, the roads are unsafe."

"All roads are safe to me, father, for I have a protection. Do not hinder, do not question me, for a life may be lost either by my explaining or delaying. I have never displeased you, father; trust me when I say that I know that what I am doing is both right and womanly."

'He let her go, and she lost no time in reaching Halifax.

'It was already evening; her uncle was knocked up, having watched all the previous night, and he had gone to bed. Cousin Harry was preparing to go out.

"It is getting dark, you can't go out to-night,

Harry," said my mother.

"What an idea!" exclaimed Harry. "Don't you know that I am on duty, and that I am bound in honour to visit every one of the outposts before I go to bed?"

"In that case you must go, but I shall go with

you."

'In vain he remonstrated. She carried her point; she followed him from place to place, and at last they came to a very ugly dark alley, through which they had to pass. She held closely to her cousin there; some men jostled them, and she heard a voice whisper: "We can't do it to-night, for the

girl is with him." They reached home in safety. That very night a brother officer of his was shot as he went upstairs to bed.

'In the morning the military arrived from York, the ringleaders of the riots were seized and imprisoned; the town was overruled by the soldiers, and order was restored. On the trial of some of the rioters it transpired that three men had been told off to murder Cousin Harry, and that before they and others went out to their criminal night's work, the lists of condemned and protected were read out to them; thus it was that they dared not shoot the one for fear of injuring the protected girl, and in this way my mother saved a life.'

'Please, Madam, may I tell how my brother saved a life?'

'Yes, Agnes, we shall be glad to hear.'

'She was a young lady. My brother was putting her across the river; she would lean over, though he asked her not, and she upset the boat. Frank could swim, but he saw the lady was drowning, so he cried out: "Jesus help," and he caught at a branch of willow with one hand, and at her with the other. There are awful holes in our river, and the stream is strong. The lady was as heavy as lead through her clothes being full of water, and Frank thought she would have sunk him, but he got to the bank, and he hauled her up.'

'That was a noble action, Agnes; you are right

to be proud of your brother. The Royal Humane Society would have given him a medal if they had known of the case. And if men value and reward such an action, you may be very sure that the merciful God will reward it much more generously. He promises a reward even for a cup of water given in His name. Kindnesses and acts of charity, be they little or great, are beautiful in the sight of God, and are eagerly gathered up by our angelguardian to carry to our savings bank in heaven.'

'I hope no riots will be got up in our days," said Eleanor. 'I should be frightened out of my senses.'

'It would be very dreadful, but I suppose it was only gentlemen that they shot at?' suggested Minnie.

'They began with the masters, but they burnt whole mills and houses, and they murdered any of the men who held with the masters. They brought starvation on thousands. It was the same these recent years in the iron-work strikes, as you well know, Minnie. Peaceable men who believed what those said who had means of knowing the real state of affairs, such men agreed to work for lower wages till trade should become better. But the impatient and bullying workmen refused to work for themselves, and compelled all under their influence to refuse too. The masters were ruined, the works were stopped; customers, unable longer to get iron

in England or Wales, bought it from Belgium, and the trade was lost for years. Hundreds and thousands starved, and hundreds are still less than halffed in consequence of those mad revolts.'

'Then were those strikers murderers?' asked Elsie, timidly.

'They were in reality, but not in intention. They were ignorant, and in their conceit they thought they knew better than the masters. Selfishness and pride are at the bottom of all these outbreaks, but those who begin them seldom mean to cause the sorrow which their false reasoning brings about. I believe Frances once saved a set of servants from behaving in this foolish way, but she is too modest to tell about it.'

Frances began to cry. 'I broke the commandment last week,' she sobbed, 'when I boxed the ears of Lizzie and Mary, so that goes against the time I saved it being broken.'

'It might do so in men's judgment, but not in that of our all-merciful God, Frances. Your reward for the good act is safely stored in heaven, and the punishment for your intemperate anger was remitted when in true sorrow you made your confession. Neither God nor your companions remember it any more.'

'And we were quite as naughty,' said the two children. 'Please, Madam, do tell Frances to give over fretting, and to laugh and sing as before.' So the mystery of Frances's silence was explained—the two little girls had quarrelled, and were bandying words together, most unseemly for such young mouths. Frances heard, and in a passion boxed both their ears right heartily, and they hit her back again. They were all shy of the instruction that Sunday, for Madam had already explained to them that they were guilty of breaking the Fifth Commandment.

'Scandal and bad example are also forbidden by the Fifth Commandment. These are points we all need to be very tender upon. Those who have the charge of children, as governesses or nurses, may easily incur great guilt by doing things in the presence of the children which it would be sinful in them to do, or which may make them think that the laws of God are not of much consequence. Charity requires us to be very careful of all around us, for it is a solemn fact that if we cause others to sin, we have to bear a share of the punishment. for instance, we have some weakness which makes the doctor order us to eat meat on a Friday, or during Lent, we must explain to any strangers, especially if they are children or Protestants, that we have a sufficient reason for so setting aside the law of the Church, otherwise the impression would be given that people could please themselves whether they obey or not. In the same way, if we dance or play cards on a Sunday before Protestants, they

think we are deliberately breaking the Sabbath; we are therefore obliged to deny ourselves those amusements in their presence.

'When young girls get into a dreary mood, which may come upon them just because they are in weak health or suffering from indigestion, they are very liable to say: "I am sick of this business;" "I wish work was over, and it was time to go to bed;" "Stitch, stitch, stitch—it is sickening;" "I hate dressmaking, and I do wish I was a lady;" "These new fashions are so tiresome. I do wish I was dead." This is a very common way of giving bad example. The girl who so speaks may be a good girl, but she is venting her gloomy feelings in a very dangerous way. Apprentices who hear an improver talking like that begin to do the same, and the mistress finds it next to impossible to get work nicely and tastefully done by girls who are always on the grumble. It is the same with servants—on some days they feel more or less ill-so they complain of the hardness of everything, and those under them take the same tone. Here is another reason for cultivating self-control—to suppress the grumbling which gives very bad example. shall see the different ways of giving bad example as we study the different commandments.'

The instruction over, the girls gathered round the French mistress, who was ready to teach them a new song.

LES MONTAGNARDS.

'Montagnes, O Pyrénées, Vous êtes mes amours! Cabanes fortunées,

Vous me plaisez toujours!
Rien n'est si beau que ma patrie,
Rien ne m'est doux que mon amie.
O montagnards, chantez en chœur
De mon pays le joie et la bonheur.
La, la, la, la, la.

iii Suis mai dans la same

"Suis moi dans la campagne,"
Me dit un étranger,
"Laise la ta montagne,
Et ne sois plus berger."
Non, non, jamais telle folie,
Je suis heureux en cette vie,
J'ai ma ceinture et mon beret,
Mes chants joyeux, ma lyre et mon châlet.

La, la, la, la, la.

Translation-

THE MOUNTAINEERS.

'O mountains, O Pyrenees,
You are my beloved!
O most happy homes,
You delight me for ever!
What so lovely as my country,
What so endearing as my friend?
O mountaineers, sing a chorus sweet
Of the joy and gladness of my mountain home.
La, la, la, la, la.

A stranger says to me,

"Come, follow to my land,
Turn from your mountains blue,
And be no more a shepherd."

"No, no, no," I cry, "never such mad folly;
This life my constant gladness is.
I have my girdle and my cap,
My merry songs, my harp and home."
La, la, la, la, la.

Madam looked into the room as the song continued. Frances had caught up the French capitally. She listened to the end, and then said:

'The song suits your voice, Frances, and what sentiment there is is very good. It is a contented song—the boy loves what God has given him, and prefers his lot to that of any other. Learn the song well; it will be very pleasant in our concert.'





CHAPTER VII.

SIXTH COMMANDMENT.

THE girls arrived in good time on the following Sunday, but Bertha took Gertrude straight off to Madam for a private talk on the momentous question whether she should become a Catholic. Gertrude was still a year from the end of her apprenticeship, and in a great degree dependent on her parents, and she felt sure that her embracing the Catholic faith would annoy them very much. Whilst this conversation went on upstairs, a very different scene was being enacted in the great Ethel Rivers had brought some of the thinnest possible tissue-paper, and had taught the girls to make it into pretence butterflies. And now every girl had her butterfly, and was blowing it up in the air, or wafting it hither and thither by a fan made of a half sheet of a newspaper. Great

was the fun this occasioned—people ran up against one another, and often one or both, losing their footing on the polished boards, rolled on to the floor; other people's butterflies alighted on the heads, shoulders, or extended arms of rival butterfly-keepers. It was against the rule to touch them with the hand; they must only be blown off.

When Madam Margaret and Gertrude opened the door, they stood amazed; so much noise was going on that nobody heard the door open; everybody's cheeks were puffed out blowing their hardest, and what seemed a crowd of insects was in the air. One girl passing the door saw the two standing there, and stopped suddenly. The one behind her fell up against her and tripped another, and all three rolled into one heap at the feet of Madam, while the rest blew and blew, and flapped and flapped at their butterflies.

Madam quietly signed to Gertrude to return with her to the quiet room, and she nodded to the girls to continue their game; she had not given Gertrude half the instruction she wished to do, so she left the rest to amuse themselves while she helped Gertrude to a decision. It was finally arranged that Gertrude should continue to come for instructions as often as she could get leave to come out, and that she should presently write to her parents and ask their permission to become a Catholic; and if they refused, that she should wait

till the end of her apprenticeship, after which, having paid them the respect of eleven months' delay, she should follow the dictates of her conscience, and begin at once to make her own living.

At four o'clock Madam returned to the parlour. The butterfly-hunters were tired and breathless; the butterflies were torn and broken. Minnie took the parlour-broom and swept them off the floor into the fire, and the girls gathered round the table for the instructions.

'Sixth Commandment: "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

'I approach this terrible subject with fear, my dear girls, for I have it on the highest authority that the breach of this Commandment sends more souls to hell than that of any other. God has given to Eve and her daughters warm, tender, sensitive hearts, with which they may serve Him most sweetly and acceptably, and the devil, true to his sworn revenge against God and His creature, is ever striving to turn these hearts against God and against holiness. Even little children can be assailed by temptations against holy purity; but they come more frequently and more strongly to young girls such as you. God, in His omniscience, foreseeing what efforts the devil would make to lead astray women's heart, prepared a wonderful help and strength to support His rights regarding them, in giving us His holy and Immaculate Mother to be the Friend and Leader of her sex, and to protect her children, and animate them by her example, so as to shield them from the assaults of the Wicked Spirit.

'The Blessed Virgin was very young when the angel Gabriel saluted her as "full of grace." God, by His divine will, had created her without the stain of original sin, the only creature exempt from that curse—made holy before her birth by the grace of her divine Son, on purpose that she might be fit to become His Mother. There is a tendency to evil in all our hearts that did not exist in our Blessed Lady's; but the Blessed Virgin will procure for all of us grace enough to resist evil if we occupy our thoughts with the life and passion of her Holy Son.

'St. Anne and St. Joachim had already arranged a marriage for their innocent daughter. St. Joseph was a man of deep piety; he had seen the Holy Child when she was being brought up in the Temple, and he proposed for her to share his home. It was not, according to the manners of those times, that girls should choose their own husbands, and Mary yielded to the wish of her parents in accepting Joseph as her affianced spouse, as simply as she did to the message of the angel to become the Mother of our Lord.

At some such age as this God pours into a young girl's heart a wondrous power of loving, and

a strong craving to be loved. Her good angel puts before her the sweet, loving virgin of Nazareth, so simple, so pure, so unselfish, whether as daughter in her parents' house, or as mother in the chaste home of Nazareth: He puts before her the thoughts of Jesus Christ, the Lover of Souls, the Heroic Redeemer of Mankind, more daring than any hero of romance, more loving and faithful than any troubadour, and He tries patiently to fix the ardent young affections on these, knowing well that none but Jesus and His Holy Mother will give back to the affectionate heart the strength of love it craves for. God tries to draw His child on to love wise friends and safe companions; He tries to draw her thoughts away from marriage during those early years, when every sentiment regarding that state can only contain excitement, and imaginings both false and harmful, and to get her to follow after true charity to God and man, loving all and helping all, and safely protected and enveloped in the boundless love of God. But the devil sees the heart brimming over with affection, and hastens to spoil God's work; he tempts the girl to plays and other scenes where love is pourtrayed in a manner to excite the imagination and bewilder the heart; he brings her bad novels and romances, which are filled with that which poisons true love, and turns it to what is devilish; he seeks for her bad companions, who tell her tales as poisonous as the

books; and, alas, alas! he succeeds in turning the pure gift of woman's affection into a means of dishonouring God, and ruining her own soul in thousands of girls as young and as well-disposed as you are.

'I know you have often thought me a tiresome prude in the Home when I have forbidden you playing at being lovers, and when I have checked all excessive caresses; it was all because I know the treasure with which God is filling your hearts, and the cunning eagerness of the devil to turn it all to poison. You have said sometimes, with an impatience I can easily forgive, "You want us all to be nuns." No, dear girls, I am not so silly as to want you to be anything but what God calls you to. If He calls you to be nuns, He gives you a great honour; may He give you grace to correspond to it! But what He most certainly does call you to is to be good, pure girls, to give your hearts to Him, and to guard them from every impure affection. If later He calls you to marry, then consider the solemnity of the step you take. The state of marriage is one of grave responsibility; its portal is a Sacrament. It is not a matter to be joked and giggled about, but to be prepared for on your knees, and it will exact from you more patience and self-denial, more self-control and devotion, than any situation you have held before, be it that of governess, dressmaker, shop-woman,

or servant. People have often told me as a great joke, that "such and such a girl was trying to be a nun, but the Reverend Mother found she had no vocation, and immediately on leaving the convent she got engaged to be married." I don't consider this result a joke at all, but the most reasonable thing in the world. A young girl becomes conscious of the powerful affection of her heart; she piously wishes to give her heart and life to God; she makes a noble sacrifice of her home, her friends, her ambitions and her pleasures, and offers herself to God to enter religion. God is well-pleased with her honest devotion; but the religious life is not the state He has foreordained for her. He inspires her Confessor and her Superior to tell her that she has no vocation for religion, and she leaves the convent carrying with her the same heart full of love to God, the same resolution to give her life to Him. God sends her a husband, and she enters the marriage state still zealous to serve God, and to give her heart to Him in loving her husband according to His ordinance, and in bringing up her children in His fear. She enters the state by its sacramental door, and receives from God the full graces of the state. The purer the heart is, the closer the union of the young heart with God, the more upright the life in the world, the better is a girl prepared for matrimony. It is enough to make our angel-guardians weep to see the idiotic

way in which girls try to marry. Some begin while mere children to adorn themselves with gaudy finery, to talk loud in the streets and parks, and to look about them on every side, and they think thus to attract young men to wish to marry Surely it could only be lunatics who could be so attracted. Let a girl desire marriage reasonably, and say so honestly without simpering and bridling, and let her fit herself for the state she means to enter. Girls don't become professed nuns the moment they feel the desire for the religious life-no, they must be postulants first, and then novices—they must patiently learn their duties. Let a young girl, be she governess, workgirl, or servant, learn to mend her clothes, to make her linen, and the whole apparel of children; let her learn something of cooking and house-work, accounts and book-keeping, so that she can either teach her servants, if able to have servants, or she can make the home comfortable, and put the wages to the furthest. Preparing herself thus, and keeping up well to her religion, she may trust to the love of God to give her the lot He sees best for her, and she will be a real help and consolation to the husband God sends, and a great loss to the home she leaves.

'As most of you are fond of singing, and have good voices, I would touch also on music as being one of the gifts of God, which the devil perverts

to evil uses. You remember that you have sometimes learned songs, and quotations from songs, the repetition of which I have forbidden in the These songs you had picked up accidentally in the streets, but they were written for publichouses and low music-halls, on purpose to amuse people while drinking, and lead them on to vice. It is a great snare to young people who have ready wit, as some of you have, to introduce quotations from such songs, to make their conversation sound piquant, or, as you would say, spicy; but if men heard you so speak, they would think you were bold girls, therefore I try to prevent your getting such a habit. I am anxious that you should be very careful in choosing the songs you sing. I hope that most or all of you will become children of Mary, and that every allusion to anything bold or coarse will be foreign to your lips.

'In your friendships, also, keep the Blessed Virgin, our good Mother, well in view. If a girl speaks to you of anything impure, or even makes any allusions to such a thing, avoid her; if she is younger, reprove her, and try to reform her; if older or cleverer, have nothing more to do with her. Be very jealous of the selfish side of friendship. Some make a friendship with another girl because she can introduce them to nice people, or because she gives them presents, or because she gets them amusement, or because she flatters them: none of these friend-

ships will come to profit. If you seek to please yourself through your friend, you will procure sorrow for both. You find another girl has the same tastes as yourself, so it suits for you to go together: very well, go together in moderation. but don't attach yourself to being with her constantly, so that you slight your other companions; and do not be always whispering to her, otherwise you will wound the others. Let charity moderate and cement your friendships. You can't help loving some better than others: you may do that, only do not on that account be unkind to the rest. When you have got a friend, do not be always kissing and hugging her, it will weaken the character of both; and those sensible proofs of affection are the self-pleasing part of friendship, and must be used in moderation. If she is in trouble, kiss her tenderly; kiss her when you say good-night. If you disagree, kiss and make friends; but don't be always doing it. It is a silly, idle habit, and very tiresome to those around you. The truest, deepest friendships are the most reserved in outward demonstration. And now that I have given you such a lot of advice, I will tell you an anecdote to amuse you a little.

'A long time ago, when I was about, say thirty, a girl of nineteen took a great liking to me, and made immense professions of friendship. She was the companion of that very niece of mine whom I

caught buying the pennyworth of toffy. We were going off for a picnic, a charming day in the woods. My brother-in-law had a nice pony-carriage which could carry four people. He and my sister, and one of my nieces, and this girl's sister had gone off to the place of the picnic in the carriage, and my niece was to return to pick us two up when the others had been deposited. We were walking together down a country-road, with high hedges on either side; a very pretty road it was, and Annie was pouring out her gushing affection: "I really never loved anyone so much as I love you." she said; "you are so this, that and the other, I will love you as long as I live, or I would even die for you." She looked into my face with an expression of absorbing affection; but at that moment an enormous pig came running towards us, followed by a train of squealing little piggies. Quick as lightning, Annie hid herself behind me, changing her position as mother pig passed by, so as to keep me ever between her and danger. The grunting family were only hurrying to an oak-tree, where they had good chances of a feast of acorns. When they had gone, Annie resumed her place at my side, and began also to resume her discourse. I saying?" she asked. "You were saying," I replied, with a little mirth in my countenance-"you were saying that you would die for me, but when danger came, in the form of an ugly sow, you hid yourself behind me." "Yes," she said, eagerly, "I am very much afraid of sows. I once heard of one tearing a woman in pieces!" "Exactly so," I replied; "so instead of dying for me, you wished the sow to tear me first." From that time we were very good friends, but she never again made such loud expressions of friendship.'

'But the sow didn't hurt you, did she, Madam?' asked Rose.

'No, my dear; I was not at all afraid that she would hurt me. Only, you see, the sudden fear was the test of the sincerity of my young lady's friendship. I do not at all think that she ought to have acted otherwise. I was of full age and strength, and could very well take care of myself. Only she should not have made such great professions, and said she would die for me. Once or twice in the world's history a friend has given his life to save his bosom friend. I knew a devout girl who had a sister whose life was careless. This sister was seized by illness, and the doctor said she must die: she was delirious, and the time for preparation for death was past. My friend, the devout one, prayed earnestly to God to take her, and spare her unprepared sister. The next day she began in the same fever; dangerous symptoms appeared, and she died. As soon as she died, the other began to get better, and is alive and well now. God accepted the sacrifice, and the sister

rescued from death lives in His faith and fear. Yet, strong as was the affection between these sisters, they were not given to constant caressing.

'A good priest told me a laughable story one day of an honest servant-girl, a child of Mary.

She was carrying a bucket of water upstairs, and she met a so-called gentleman, a visitor in the house, who said some too free words to her in passing, and offered to put his arm round her; instantly she turned and emptied her bucket over his head. The bad man retired discomfited, his fine curled hair dripping with water, and himself drenched to the skin. Of course his bad conduct became known in the house, and he was never invited there again.

'As a proof to you of how much Almighty God loves and rewards the virtue of Holy Purity, I will tell you the story of Placidus, than which no fairy story can be more wonderful. Placidus was a Roman general, and lived in an age when rich men gave full indulgence to the vilest passions. But Placidus lived a good life, loving his wife, Theopista, and remaining faithful to her; and he was kind and gentle to all around him. One day he was out hunting with a number of his friends, and several deer appeared; he marked one that seemed to him more beautiful than all the rest, and gave chase to it. It led him miles away from his friends, but as night approached it paused, and turning,

looked at him, and he beheld a bright light between its beautiful horns, and in the light the image of the Crucified; he paused amazed, and a voice said: "Placidus, why dost thou follow Me? Behold, I have taken this form to speak to thee; thy purity and charity have made Me follow thee with My Placidus replied, trembling, speaks? Reveal Thyself that I may know Thee." And the voice replied, "I am Jesus Christ, the Creator of all things, and having made man from the slime of the earth, I have appeared in human flesh for his redemption, and been crucified and risen from the dead. Go, Placidus, and seek the chief Pastor and be baptised." Placidus remained for hours on his knees adoring Jesus Christ; then he went to his wife and told her all that had happened, and he and she and their children went and were baptised. Great sorrows came afterwards: thieves came and robbed them of all they had; persecutions arose, and they fled the country, sailing away in a little ship. Still the devil harassed them; the captain fell in love with Theopista, and tried to bribe Placidus to give her to him. Of course he refused to do so. So the wicked captain took Placidus and his two boys and put them on shore, and sailed away, leaving them to starve. Theopista prayed God to protect her virtue, and God inspired the captain with such a reverence for her that he never injured her. Placidus carried his

two boys away, but they came to a river, and the stream being strong, he could only carry one across at a time. As he arrived at the other side he saw a lion coming to the child he had left; he hurried back, but before he could get to the child the lion had carried him away. Returning, he saw a wolf seize the second child and carry it off. He threw himself on his knees, and weeping bitterly he prayed God to care for his wife and children, and resigned himself to his fate. The people of the country took him and made a servant of him, and he laboured in the land. Ere long a war broke out, and the emperor had need of his brave general. and he sent men all over to seek him; and at last two veterans who had served under him in the wars found him at his work. He went gladly with them to fight the king's battles, though now he was become an aged man.

'Victory followed his arms, brave young fellows flocked to his standard, and he was beloved alike by his soldiers and by the conquered people for his justice and moderation. Finding a nice vineyard belonging to a poor widow, he hired it of her, that he might pitch his tent there; and he took two young soldiers whose countenances and conduct pleased him, to serve him and carry his orders to the others. These two, speaking together, owned that they dared not commit vice, and by degrees gathered courage to own to one another that they

were baptised Christians. The one said, "Yes, my comrade, I must obey God, for he saved me by the mouth of a lion." "I also am bound to God, for He saved me by a wolf," said the other. then showed the medals that had been found round their necks, and each recognised his brother. us come and tell our good general," said the elder; and when they had but well begun their story. Placidus recognised his children. Not long after the poor widow came to him, and she said, "Oh, my lord general, I beg of you to take me back to Rome, for I am a Roman lady; but a cruel captain killed my husband and children, and I have lived desolate, but in the fear of God." Placidus found by one or two questions that it was his long lost wife. Then the emperor died, and the new emperor recalled the army. When Placidus entered Rome the people expected he would bring numerous captives that they might kill, but in his mercy he had set all free. This angered the emperor and the people. Then they called on him to offer sacrifice to the gods, which of course he refused. So they seized him and his wife and his sons, and dragged them off to the Coliseum; and the people crowded all that vast building, and the poor victims were placed together in the arena, and the wild beasts let loose upon them. The people expected that they would at once be torn in pieces. but both the lions and the tigers went and fawned on them, and would not hurt them at all. The emperor was in a great rage, and commanded that the beasts should be goaded on, but they turned and tore the attendants, and would not hurt the Christians. The wild beasts behaved thus on many occasions, showing marvellous reverence for such as practised holy purity. But the cruel and enraged emperor could not long support the sight of these detested Christians, and he commanded them to be thrust into the bronze bull, and then a fire was lighted underneath, and they were baked to death. When their bodies were taken out, there was no smell or sign of fire, but only a most delicious odour: the soldiers threw them into the field, but their fellow-Christians came by night and stole the bodies, and buried them in the Catacombs.

'One more word to you, my dear girls, that I may not have to recur to this subject again. You often fancy that you are misunderstood; that people regard you as machines; that, because you are poor, you are little accounted of—who cares for a governess, a work-girl, a servant? When these thoughts come into your mind, say to Satan: 'Don't you think to deceive me with your lies. Just as I am, the great God loves me supremely, all the more because I am poor. Our Blessed Virgin Mother loves me; she was poorer than I am, and she seeks to make a daughter and compa-

nion of me. My confessor thoroughly understands and loves my soul, and cares for me, both as to this world and the next. My director loves me well, and sees all the affection that is in my heart and all the dangers that surround me; my parents, relatives, and companions love me. It is one of your lies that the rich are more loved than the poor; more fuss is made about them and they are more indulged, but that is for the pleasures that they can give, and it is self-interest, not true love, and endangers the poor souls so flattered. God and His saints and angels, and His priests and servants on earth, love the poor best; and our Blessed Lord has said it, so I will never believe your lies."

As Madam passed by Frances, on her way to the tea-room, she saw a very earnest expression on her face. She stopped; and laying her hand on the girl's shoulder, she said:

- 'You look as if there was a volume in your heart, only you won't let yourself speak it. Say whatever you wish, my child.'
- 'I only want to say that, if I had been with you when you met the sow, I would not have put you between me and danger.'
- 'I quite believe you, Frances. You have proved the honesty of your attachment by controlling your tongue thoroughly the last fortnight, and to a considerable degree during the weeks before that.

This has been far more difficult to you than it would have been to fight a brute beast. Persevere as you have begun, and I shall find no reason to doubt your dutifulness either to me or to our Divine Master.'

Tears filled Frances's eyes as she followed to the tea-room, and her nature prompted her to begin talking vociferously; but she struggled against her old habit, and made another step upwards on the ladder of self-control.





CHAPTER VIII.

SEVENTH COMMANDMENT.

'What did you do on St. Patrick's Day?' asked little Rose of Edith, when they were chatting over the fire, the Sunday following.

'On St. Patrick's Day! exclaimed Edith; 'I never noticed it. You know at our place they make no account of saint-days, and we three, and Gertrude too, are all either English or Welsh girls. What did you do? You are more than half of you Irish.'

'We got up early, and all went to Mass and Holy Communion; and we had shamrocks, and you know we didn't drink anything for three days.'

'Really, how thirsty you must have been!'

Rose laughed heartily: 'We drank tea and coffee, and milk and such things, only no beer nor spirits; they call it the "Truce of God."'

- 'And what does that mean, Rose?'
- 'You do ask such questions, Edith!—how should I know? Truce means leaving off fighting; for when we are playing "baggage," we cry "Truce," when we are tired and want a breathing-time; but I do not exactly know how three days without drinking beer can be a "Truce of God."
- 'I think I begin to see it, Rose. Drinking is one of the devil's works, and makes war against God and His angels. Here is Madam; let us ask her if that is what it means.'
- 'You have guessed rightly,' she said. 'We deny ourselves the pleasure of all drinks that can cause intoxication during three days. The feast of St. Patrick is a day dear to the heart of every son and daughter of Erin; and just for good nature and jollity of heart they begin to drink, and alas! ere they leave off, the peace of God is broken, and there is quarrelling and fighting and cursing and all kinds of sinfulness.'

Other girls had gathered round to listen; some had drawn their chairs near, others were standing, many were kneeling by Madam or by their companions—all were interested. Beatrice asked timidly:

- 'Did you leave off all wine and beer too, Madam?
 - 'I did, for the three days.'
 - 'But I thought it could be only those who had

sinned against God by drunkenness who could need to make a "truce." I don't know how to express myself, but it somehow seems not all right.'

'I think I know what is perplexing you, Bertha. You see plainly enough that drunkenness is a war against God. The drunken man or woman breaks God's commandments on every side. He fails to adore God: he takes His Name in vain; he pollutes the Sabbath; he dishonours parents and priests and rulers; he sins against the Fifth Commandment by "fighting, quarrelling, and injurious words;" he breaks the sixth, by filthy language and base acts; his very state is a breach of the seventh, for he has taken away the food of his children and the clothing of his wife by spending all the money on drink, and his horrid intoxication turns all his thoughts into sins against the three last commandments. A man accustomed to sin thus, has indeed great need to keep the "Truce of God." But you do not see that a person like myself, who is not even tempted to rebel against God by drink, has any reason for abstaining from itin other words, one who has not been at war has no need to make a "truce."

'Yes, yes, that's just it!' exclaimed Bertha, and several of the others expressed their agreement in the idea.

'I am glad that you are puzzled, dear girls, be-

cause this gives me an opportunity of explaining to you the doctrines of atonement and reparation. God said plainly to our first parents that if they disobeyed His law they must die eternally. They did disobey, and they and all their children passed under the sentence of eternal death. Christ, the Son of God, pitied their misery, and died in their place, offering His life a sacrifice for sin-not His own, but theirs. His death was vicarious, that is, for others. He also lived a life full of penance, and of good works, and thus gained enormous merits, and these also are vicarious—gained to give to others. Holv Church has received from Christ the keys of the treasury of His merits, and she can give of them to her children; this is the gift called Indulgences. She also teaches her children to emulate the example of their Master and Saviour, and to try to do good works, either in reparation for the sins of others, or to merit graces for them. Thus we, who have many friends whom we love well, Irish or English, who are iable at times to offend God by drinking, we keep the 'truce of God' to repair His honour injured by their fault, and to win for them the grace to amend. Now, do you see how it comes "all right"?

- 'Yes, dear Madam; but may I ask another question?
- 'As many as you like, Bertha. There is not a better way of getting instruction.'

- 'You said that a man who drinks breaks the Seventh Commandment. Has he not a right to use the money he earns just as he pleases?'
- 'Most certainly not. The money that we have, whether we earn it ourselves, or whether our fore-fathers bequeathed it to us, is only given us in trust. It all belongs to God, and He gives it us for certain purposes. He gives us also Reason and Conscience, and these tell us how we ought to spend our money. If we spend it rightly God rewards us; when we stand before Him in judgment, He will ask for a strict account of all that has passed through our hands.'
- 'I wish my father could understand that, for he puts mother about sorely sometimes; he earns a good deal, but she only gets very little from him, and she is sickly, and not fit to work as she does.'
- 'You must pray to God to send the light of His grace into your father's heart, and deny yourself in the matter of taking beer or wine, when it comes in your way, so as to make reparation for his fault. I have often wished to speak to you all on this subject, for although you are guarded from any danger of this kind whilst living in the Home, the devil is very fond of laying snares for young girls when they visit their friends. You often walk long distances, not, perhaps, having the train fare handy; and when you are tired, a glass of beer or

spirits and water seems so to cheer you up, that it is difficult to refuse it. But I do earnestly beg of you to refuse it, even though your friends press it, and it seems so innocent. I hate young girls to taste spirits, or even to take beer except at meals; and when you have had time to think well about it, I shall try to get you to promise solemnly not to touch spirits. I have known girls as respectable as you, and as good-hearted; they took spirits because they were weary, or had bad headaches, or were weak, and in a year or two I should not have known them for the same persons. I have seen the same change come over ladies, not poor governesses, but rich ladies for whom there was no excuse. Even little children are tempted to this by the cruel devil. Father or mother sends them with the empty bottle to get sixpence worth or a shilling's worth; the child is hungry and cold; she tastes what is in the bottle, and it cheers and warms her, and so she begins to taste, and every sip is poison. Thus the drinking father and mother ruin their own health and die of one disease or another, and the children die either of disease caused by their own tasting of their parent's poison, or of the exhausted constitution inherited from their parents. The evil act of drinking soon becomes a habit, and then the devil has no more trouble, for the drunkard tempts himself; nay, worse, the human nature, poisoned before

its birth by original sin, becomes so brutalised by actual sin habitually recurring, that one vice follows on another, and the poor creature made in the image of God, baptized into His grace, sanctified by sacraments, and destined for heaven, is soon turned into an enemy of God, and a creature fit only to live with the devils.

'Here is another lesson on habits. A habit is formed by repeated acts—a good habit by repeated acts of virtue, a bad habit by repeated acts of vice. To take a glass of spirits and water is not wrong—no, my dear, dear children, it is not wrong to take one—but to take one frequently would form a habit. You are young and bright-hearted, you do not need stimulants. If you feel tired or weak, ask for a cup of tea; that is very refreshing, and you need no more. You can buy a glass of milk for a penny, get that when you need something, do not get a "pick-meup." When a girl takes spirits her good temper is soon gone, then modesty goes, then industry, then honesty—and what a wreck she becomes! Oh, be brave, and do refuse it altogether!

'I knew a pretty, modest servant-girl. She was warm-hearted, and loved God, and her Church, and her mistress. Poor child! her parents had been confirmed drunkards, and they died of their drinking, and left their innocent infant friendless. God raised up a motherly heart to care for the little one, and she was brought up in safety and piety—

but the poison was in her blood. She was devout and honest, she prayed, and worked, and loved, and was beloved by all. She came in the way of drink, and the love of it was in her blood; she seized it, and drank, and, oh, the change that came over her! Fierce passion, bold rough action-no obedience, no modesty. In the morning she was penitent, she went to confession, and mourned her fault; but from that time she had a craze for spirits. But she was good and brave, she was convinced of her inability to control herself, and she placed herself in a convent where she would be guarded from all such temptations. I tell you this to make you fear the drink, in the hopes that you will be brave enough to deny yourself the glass, even though it be quite lawful to take it.

'But the subject of our discussion to-day should be the Seventh Commandment, and though drinking is a breach of it, as well as of others, it is not the direct way of breaking it. The Catechism says: "The Seventh Commandment forbids all taking away or keeping of what belongs to another."

'We all remember plenty of instances of the direct breach of this commandment. The thief who climbs into the bedroom window and carries off the lady's jewellery, the shop-lifter who pockets goods while pretending to buy, the boys who rob the orchard, the pickpocket who seizes watch and

pocket-handkerchief-these are sins that need no explanation. The instance of direct theft that most touched my heart was done by a little boy called Teddy. Johnny and Teddy were unfortunate children; their mother drank most of what their father earned, and they were often starving, and always in rags-but they had very loving hearts and very honest faces. Teddy was sent an errand by the schoolmistress, and when I entered the school I found poor Teddy standing on a bench, with a label round his neck on which was written in large letters THIEF. I asked, in dismay, what had happened, and the mistress informed me that Teddy had stolen an orange off a pedlar's cart, and had brought it to school to eat. The orange was confiscated, only poor Teddy had had one big bite. I told Teddy how sorry I was, but he looked so penitent, I pitied more than blamed him. Months passed, and Teddy and Johnny were to make their first confession, along with others of their age, and it was my business to prepare them. All the other children learned much more easily than these two, having been at school for many years, while I had only got hold of these two during that year. When the priest came to hear the confessions, and all the other children were ready to go to him, Teddy and Johnny came to me and said:

" Please, Miss, us don't know what to say."

'So I took them into the class-room and knelt down with them, and told them to tell me all the naughty things they had ever done, and I promised to love them none the less. I took the commandments one by one, and they told me quite simply how far each had disobeyed: one had missed Mass to go squirrel-hunting; he had cursed his mother when she was drunk, he had fought and quarrelled often enough; and had taken some pears out of his father's pocket. When Teddy's sins were under discussion I so wondered whether he would remember the scene in the school, and great was my relief when he exclaimed:

"'Oh! and you know, Miss, there was that orange."
'The Catechism carries the inquirer further in seeking out the ways of offending against this commandment: "All manner of cheating in buying or selling, and all other ways of wronging our neighbour."

'As long as we touched only on the flagrant sins of theft, we all of us felt a hope of acquittal. Dishonesty is scorned by our neighbour, as well as detested by God, and we are ashamed at the bare thought of committing so base an act. But the question is much more searching when conscience is asked—"Have I bought or sold unfairly?" If we get too much change in paying for what we have bought, or if we see that the seller has got confused and given us an article at a price lower than it is

marked, we are bound to point out to him that he is wronging himself; failing to do this, we are guilty against the commandment. Or if, in selling, we exact an unjust price, because we see that the buyer is rash or inexperienced, or if we fail to give right change, or if we sell a damaged article, calling it perfect, or in any way take advantage of another, we are transgressors of this law. The "other ways of wronging our neighbours" are manifold. I will speak of those most dangerous to ourselves. You know that I have sometimes been vexed at the insufficient amount of work done in the workrooms; and if I have scolded or punished you, you have thought it was because I was greedy of the gains. And I was greedy of the gains because we had, in a measure, to live on them; and I neither wanted to starve you, nor to wrong the butcher and the baker by leaving their bills unpaid. But, much more than that, I was anxious for your honour-I had almost said your honesty. You each covenanted to give such a period of work, and we understood that to mean diligent work, just as you understood us to mean sufficient food and shelter. If because the weather is hot, or dull, or dispiriting, or because vou have a little headache, or because the work is ugly, you are idle or dissipated, you are wronging your neighbour. I meet a look from a pair of dark eyes, which says, "What a fuss about nothing! it is no sin." Ah, there we come on one

of the rocks marked "Danger." It is not a mortal sin-no, God forbid it should be so easy to lose His grace, which is our life—but neither is it "nothing." These venial sins defended and excused, and therefore allowed repeatedly, are very bad things, be they little wrongs to our neighbours, little falsehoods, little thefts, or little backbitings. We are seldom truly sorry for them, and therefore they are seldom fully forgiven; but they go down in God's black book, hindering the flow of His graces towards us, and earning for us weary periods in Purgatory. I pray God to give you so tender and filial a love of Him, that as soon as you know a thing to be a sin at all, you may turn your back on it, and say, "Get you gone, you have no charm for me!" Father in Heaven is ever watching for such acts of love; and the work-girl who stitches on diligently, despite her own disinclination, is making a robe of glorious beauty to offer to Jesus Christ. Another danger to us all is wilful waste. Ah! my blackeved friend is really indignant now. "Madam is not nice to-day," her look says; "she is trying to put fault on us." No, my dear child, I am helping your angel guardian to get a store of merits for you. I am sorry for you when the weather is hot and your head aches, and I know you are a brave girl, and never complain if you can help it. And just because it is so hot, and you feel so bothered, the whalebone splits crooked, and the scissors run into your hand, and you crack the piece up in impatience, and so a whole length is wasted. And it is so disagreeable to use the hot iron, and you do it in a cross manner, and burn your fingers, and let the iron fall on some costly material, and there is a half vard spoiled. You have had to stoop twice to pick up your scissors, and now the silk lining falls on the floor. "Tiresome thing! it may stay there," you say; and Nelly comes in from an errand, in which she has been overtaken by a thundershower, and she puts a large muddy foot on the silk lining, and oh, how it is soiled! It is not your fault, you say, and she says it is not hers; but somehow the neighbour has got wronged, and you have lost that jewel that you would have received. had you conquered your impatience, and taken the silk up from the floor. Another way in which merit can be gained or lost under this commandment, is the pieces of lace, or silk, or other trifling articles, which are lying here and there in the house. little bit of ribbon which will make a pretty knot for your neck or hair will really not be missed by the lady whose costly dress is trimmed with yards and vards of the same kind-no, it will not seriously injure her, but it will make you so much less pleasing to Almighty God, that the injury to yourself will be very serious. Resist the desire, and your hair or neck will look bright and lovable in the sight of God and His angels; yield to the desire, and you will have to grieve sorely in this life or in Purgatory.

'It is the same danger to girls who are under training for service—nay, it is even more important for them as regards this life, and equally so as to the life eternal. Once I went to visit a famous female prison. I saw a pretty, respectable-looking young woman wearing away her life in solitary confinement, picking oakum till her fingers were raw, and seeing no kind face nor exchanging a kind word from week-end to week-end. I asked what crime that nice young woman had committed. She had stolen some money, and as she was a domestic servant, it was severely punished, for she had been Thus it is that the law of England regards trusted. dishonesty in servants. You see our servants are members of our families, they have access to our possessions; we are in this sense in their power. We could have no peace in the house with them if we could not trust them. Their character for honesty is their fortune. Therefore it gives me serious pain when I hear that a girl has lost a pretty new ribbon, or some tinsel brooch or locket, which they are just as well without, but which must be as a burning coal to the person who has taken it. Dear children, I beseech you, as you would keep in the love of God, and be respected in life, take nothing that you dare not take in the presence of us all. Do not allow yourselves to think that because a thing

is not a mortal sin you are free to do it. Such venial sins as these, well understood and deliberately committed, destroy the health of the soul, make mortal sin easy, forfeit a great portion of your merits, and ensure long and painful times in Purgatory.

'Borrowing unasked is a danger, too—a step towards petty theft. Some of you are liable to take linen, handkerchiefs, ties, stockings, etc., belonging to your companions, "just till you find your own," without asking their permission. The companion is reproved for wearing a soiled apron; she pleads that hers is lost. She is reproved again for carelessness; you are then ashamed to own that you have had the apron, so you send it with the next week's soiled linen to the wash, and she gets it again, with the clean linen, and wonders where it has been. This is certainly a small injustice, but it is likely to lead to bigger ones, so let it be put aside.

'A Protestant lady one day came to ask me for a Catholic servant. I expressed some astonishment, and she thus explained herselt:

"I like Catholic girls because they have consciences. I had one who was wasteful with the gas. I reproved her, and she resented it by burning all the more. At Easter she came to me and gave me three-and-sixpence, and she said: 'I believe that is about the price of the gas I wasted for you. I will not waste any more.' I trusted that

girl ever afterwards, and she never betrayed my trust."

'In all these matters the sin or the merit depends on the will. If you avoid waste whenever you can remember, and work diligently when able, and refrain from taking what does not belong to you when the thought of it being wrong comes to you, then, if in inadvertence you waste or lose time, or take a trifle belonging to another, a very easy pardon will be granted you by God and man.

'There is yet another thing that the Seventh Commandment binds us to: it is to pay our debts. There is a great fashion in the present day of considering it necessary to have a certain number of things that we cannot properly afford. Servants and work-girls, and ladies, feel they must have variety of dress, and take excursions, and buy refreshments; and if they have not money to pay, then they borrow some. Oh, this borrowing is such a mischievous habit! One girl, whom I well love, has done much to spoil her career by this borrow-She gets a nice place, she wants new boots, and buys them on credit; her mantle has got very old-fashioned, and her fellow-servants have pretty new ones; she really must have a new one, and she can get one for a pound. A companion lends her the money. Her first month's wages are paid: she settles for the boots, and then a man comes with images to sell, and she spends the last of her

money in buying some for presents—that is very kind of her; but then she has no right to give presents till she has paid all she owes. Her conscience pricks her, but she tells it that another month will soon be due, and then she will pay. She falls ill, and has to go to the doctor; that costs her five shillings, and the medicine that she needs within the fortnight costs another five. Meanwhile she can't do her work, and a charwoman is got. The mistress soon tires of this, and she loses her place. Alas! the month's wages are swallowed up before they are due this time, and she has to borrow for her journey home. While she is out of place she wears out her common clothes; and when she gets to work again, she has difficulty in getting the most necessary things, and yet she has nasty little debts all over. A mistress who has lent money and does not get it back again, will not recommend; and thus the girl loses her character without being really dishonest.

'You know well that no one can get absolution for a sin of dishonesty without restoring ill-gotten gain. There is a humorous story told of an Irishman who, in passing through the priest's kitchen, stole a lump of bacon. He went to confession and accused himself of the theft. The priest said:

"You must promise to restore the bacon, or I can't give you absolution."

- "Sure, father," said Paddy, "I will fetch it and give it to yer reverence this very minute!"
- "Nothing of the kind," replied the priest; "I won't have the bacon on any account. Offer it to him from whom you stole it."
- "Arrah, then!" said the Irishman; "I have offered it to him, and he said he wouldn't have none of it."
- "In that case," concluded the priest, "you can keep it, and have absolution also."
- 'It is a funny story, but not a true one; for we well know God cannot be humbugged. And though the priest might pronounce the words of pardon, yet God would not take the sin away unless real restitution were made.
- 'And now, my children,' said Madam in conclusion, 'you have had a very long instruction, and have never yet heard what we did on St. Patrick's Day.'
 - 'And what did you do?'
 - 'We went to Hampstead Heath!' cried one.
 - 'We rode donkeys!' exclaimed another.
- 'Madam told us stories, and we sang to her,' said a third.
- 'It was only a half holiday, but we had fun enough for a whole one,' said a fourth.
- 'We saw beautiful country, and had our supper in the open air, and got back in time for Benediction,' said Clara.

'I wish another St. Patrick's Day would come soon, for it was jolly, though we all kept the "Truce of God."'

As the last speaker uttered these words the teabell rang, and they found that Minnie and her helpers had a cheery meal ready for them.





CHAPTER IX.

EIGHTH COMMANDMENT.

ASTER had come and gone, and many of the girls had been to their homes, Gertrude among the rest; even Madam had been to the country, and had not seen the girls for three Sundays, so when they all met again there was much to hear and tell. Gertrude had got leave to be received into the Church, and she was very happy. Beatrice had brought a younger sister up with her, and was sanguine of the conversion of her mother. Ethel was placing her sister Nora in the same house with Edith, and giving her into Edith's special charge; so the Directress said they were all becoming little mothers, and she must call the Sunday afternoons 'Mothers' meetings.'

At last they were satisfied with their consulta-

tions, and they drew round the table for the usual instruction, declaring, that having been so long deprived of it, they felt quite hungry for their accustomed food.

Madam smiled at the notion, and wished them always such good appetites.

'The Eighth Commandment is, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour." Can anyone tell me what "false witness" is?

- 'To tell a lie when bearing witness in court,' replied Edith.
- 'Do you understand what "bearing witness in court," means, Nora?'
- 'Yes, ma'am. Patsy M'Grath was had up before the magistrates for taking coal, because Ned Jones said he'd seen him do it; which was a lie, for it was Ned's self had taken it.'
- 'Was it a greater sin to tell a lie in court than to his own father?'
 - 'Yes, ma'am.'
 - 'Why, Nora?'
 - 'Don't know, ma'am.'
 - 'Rose, do you know?'
- 'Because in court they take an oath on the Gospel to speak true.'
- 'Yes, that is it. What commandment is broken by a lie in court?'
 - 'The second. It is taking God's Name in vain;

and the eighth too, because it is "false testimony."

- 'Quite right. Is there any other way of "bearing false witness"?'
 - 'Yes,' said Bertha, 'telling untruths of others.'
- 'Nora has already given us an example of that; it is a fault which everybody hates, and you would be ashamed to commit. Tell me some other more common fault against this commandment.'
 - 'Telling tales,' said Agnes.
- 'Yes, that is an evil habit; yet there are cases when it becomes a duty. I will explain it to you. Suppose a number of girls in a school are forbidden to read novels, and they find some secret way of getting them and reading them; and suppose one girl went slily and told of the rest.'
- 'She would break the commandment, and everyone would hate her.'
- 'I am sure they would. But suppose one girl began to be unhappy about it, her conscience suffered from the sin of disobedience and deceit; would she be bound to go on in it?'
 - 'No, no, no,' was answered on all sides.
 - 'What then could she do?'
 - 'Leave off herself,' said one.
- 'Tell the others that it was a bad thing, and they must all leave off,' said another.
 - 'Tell the priest,' said a third.
 - 'Would they be kind to her if she left off?'

- 'No; they would all be against her.'
- 'If she told them they must all leave off, would they follow her advice?'
 - 'No, they would only make game of her.'
- 'If she told the priest, what would he be likely to advise?'
 - 'He would bind her to tell the mistress.'
- 'He certainly would. So you see here is a case where it is of obligation to tell tales. We may not do what is wrong, nor keep secret the wrong-doing of others. But we must only tell of others to prevent sin, and we must only tell those that have the authority to stop the evil. For instance, it would be a bad action in one of those girls to go and tell her relations or her friends, because it would lower the other girls in their opinion, and they could not stop the evil. We must only speak of the faults of others to superiors, and that in order that the evil may be corrected. Thus you see we are bound not to tell falsehoods of our neighbour, not to exaggerate anything we have heard against them; and not even to tell what is true, if injurious to them, unless it be absolutely necessary so to do. I will tell you a story to impress this upon you.
- 'There was a very holy French priest, and a beautiful and fashionable lady came to him and wished him to believe that she was very holy and faultless, as she fancied herself to be. He led her

on to speak a great deal to him, and she was pleased to do so, and talked about many persons, speaking of their faults freely. At last he said to her that she must perform an act of penance, and that she expressed great willingness for. He had found out that she was a very silly talker, and he wanted to teach her a lesson. So he put a hen into her arms, and he told her to go in her carriage through all the streets of the town, and pull a feather out of the hen every ten seconds. She did as he desired, and all the feathers were stripped off the poor bird. Then he said:

"Now go and collect all those feathers again, and put each one back into its place, so that the bird's plumage be as good as before."

'She said: "Father, the thing is impossible, the wind has taken the feathers away, and I shall not be able to find one of them."

'Then he said: "So it is with your rash and harmful words: you speak here and there and everywhere of your neighbour's faults, and you do him injuries far and wide; and when your confessor tells you you can only get absolution on condition that you restore his good name, you say that it is impossible to find those you have spoken to, for they have gone away to all different parts of the world; your evil speaking has been sown like bad seed, other evil speaking will result from it, your lie will bring forth other lies, and for all this God will judge you."

- 'Tell me something else forbidden besides false testimony and lies.'
 - 'Rash judgment.'
- 'A case of rash judgment happened to a friend of mine some years ago. It was a country parish, among mines and iron foundries. There was a public-house close to where most of the Irish lived. The publican's daughter often went with the Irish girls to the Catholic chapel, and had a great respect for our priest. She became ill of typhus fever, and was in great danger; her father sent for the parson, but when he heard that it was an infectious fever he refused to go. The publican was very angry, but the girl said:
- "Never mind, father; we ought not to blame him, for he has a lot of little ones. Get Mrs. M'Grath to ask their priest to come; I'd ever so much rather have him."
- 'So Mrs. M'Grath called round for the priest, who lost no time in going to the sick girl. The Protestant schoolmaster saw him go into the public-house. He called at a house near, where he could see the door, and stayed twenty minutes; and then he went away, having formed his rash judgment. His son was coming by, late at night, and he saw the priest come out. He had paid a long visit, for the girl was dozing when he arrived, and they were unwilling to disturb her, yet still more unwilling to let him go away without

praying beside her. She awoke refreshed, and then told the priest she had a great wish to be a Catholic, so his visit to her had been long. The visit, you may be sure, was repeated, and immediately it was spread all over the place that the priest had taken to drinking; and ere long the report reached the Bishop, and he sent for him to receive a reprimand. Luckily he had had the prudence to refuse tasting anything in the publichouse, though there were good reasons for him doing so, as to take a little wine or brandy and water before going to a fever case is a great preventive to infection. It was easily set right with the Bishop, but to this day the impression prevails in the parish, that at one time that poor priest was given to drink.

'Just as sad a case took place regarding a poor girl, a Child of Mary. As an act of charity she went to visit a friend in trouble, living far away on the mountain. She could not return home till late, and it was not fit in a mining district for a girl to go home alone. Her friend's brother very properly offered to escort her home, and she felt there was no alternative but to accept his kindness. He treated her with all proper respect; but being a bad character, it was straightway reported that she had "taken up with him," and forthwith some wished her to be turned out of the Confraternity. In both these cases the rash judgment was very harmful.

'Another occurred not a hundred miles from here. One girl saw another reading a book in church, that by its binding she believed to be a novel. She went to the Superior and accused her companion. The girl produced the book; it bore the same outward appearance as the objectionable one, but was an American book of devotion. You see in each instance there was a suspicious circumstance, but if the heart of the observer had been full of true charity, he would have been anxious to seek excuses, and very slow to believe evil. Only God's own gift of charity and love of the brethren can save us from the sin of forming rash judgments. Tell me, Kate, what else is forbidden by the Eighth Commandment?'

'All calumny, detraction, and backbiting, and any other words which injure our neighbour's character.'

'Calumny is to say of our neighbour what is not true; detraction is to keep to truth in the main, but to insinuate that he did the right thing from wrong motives—to detract from his virtue; backbiting is whispering against out neighbour in secret, telling his faults and making mischief. I will give you an instance of each of these. A lady of rank had interested herself greatly in two girls, whom we will call Jane and Mary. She sent both to school, and afterwards placed them in a businesshouse to learn the dress-making. They had bee

diligent and had got a good knowledge of their business, when they heard that the maid of their patroness was going to be married. The two girls felt sure that the lady would put one of them into the place thus becoming vacant, and each was anxious that the choice should fall on herself. Mary knew that if she could get Jane out of the field she would be sure of the place. So she went to the intended bride and said that Jane had a habit of taking drink, and that whenever she got any extra pay she spent it on spirits. This being duly reported to the lady, she took Mary to be her maid, and warned the head of the business-house to look well after Jane. This was a direct calumny, but it got wind both in the lady's house and in the business-house, and Jane could get no engagement. Moreover, the head dress-maker kept her on at wages much below the value of her work; and the girl dare not leave lest she should lose all means of self-support.

'Mary enjoyed a good post; but the old house-keeper kept an eye upon her, for she had had great experience of character, and she thought that Mary was too plausible to be quite straightforward. A gentleman came to stay at the house who had a foreign valet, and he took great notice of Mary, and Mary was well pleased. The gentleman used to keep his servant up very late, but he was a generous master, so the man made no objection.

Mary's mistress had a little dog of whom she made a great pet. The dog was ill, and Mary readily undertook to sit up with it. The lady was delighted, and said to the housekeeper that Mary was the most obliging maid she had ever had. The housekeeper replied:

"Mary is fond of serving her own pleasure while pretending to serve her mistress."

'Here Mary suffered from her neighbour's breach of the commandment, for what the housekeeper said was certainly detraction, for she had only a vague suspicion, and knew nothing to warrant what she said. The head housemaid was taken ill in the night, and went down to the housekeeper's room where she knew some medicines were kept. was an old servant, and was greatly trusted. to her astonishment, she found Mary, the sick dog wrapped in a blanket in her arms, and the French valet in deep conversation. She gave a reproachful look at Mary, who made some excuse and went off to her own quarters. Mary reflected that if the housemaid were to tell the housekeeper she would stand a good chance of losing her place. not sleep at all that night, but before her mistress rang for her she made up her mind what to do. She sought the valet and persuaded him to hold with the lie that she invented; and then she told her mistress that she had had occasion to go down during the night to get something for the poor little dog, and that she had found the housemaid prowling about looking after the valet, who was known to be always up late. She further insinuated that the said housemaid was very interfering; that she neglected her own work, only she was very eager to seek up all the pieces of wax candle which were her perquisites. The lady was much astonished; she spoke to the valet, who confirmed all that Mary had said, thus bearing false witness against his neighbour; and she consoled Mary for her supposed sufferings by a handsome present, and spoke seriously to the housekeeper about dismissing the old housemaid.

'But the housekeeper begged her to take time and examine into things. She saw that the case was a very serious one, so she brought no charge against Mary at the moment, and Mary thought she had got it all her own way. It was not long before the experienced old housekeeper caught Mary flirting with the valet; but when she spoke to the valet he promptly denied it. She was at the same time watching the housemaid, and she saw that she was very attentive to all her duties, as indeed she had always been, and as to the wax candles, she found that she left them to burn low, and was less greedy than most are in trying to get long ends. At last it occurred to her to go and see the maid who had married, and in a quiet talk she found out that it was Mary who had ruined

the character of Jane. She further informed herself at the house of business, by means of the head machinist, whom she had known for many years. This woman assured her of Jane's innocence and wonderful patience under the false accusation; her companions were questioned, and all declared that Jarre was extremely steady, and had never been seen to take drink. When she had got all her information ready, she laid the whole before the mistress, and Mary found all her sins fully exposed. The valet, when taken to task by his master, acknowledged his false-witness, but said in excuse that he could not refuse the request of so charming a young lady. Mary being yet young, the lady hoped by a strong correction to make her avoid such faults in future; so she sent her for a year to a convent, to be kept very strictly to work and to prayer, and she took Jane as her maid, who has been with her ever since. Here you see all the different ways of breaking this commandmentfalse witness, lies, calumny, detraction, backbiting. Now tell me, when Mary went to confession, what would be the condition of her absolution?

- 'She would have to make satisfaction, and restore Jane's good name as far as she was able.'
 - 'Yes; but could she restore it?'
- 'She could with the lady and her servants, and with some of the work-girls, but not with everyone.'

'No: it is like the French Abbe's hen-the slanders are blown everywhere by the wind, and no one can gather them together again to destroy them. It is even a sin to listen to calumny and to take delight in it, or encourage the one speaking evil by asking questions about the matter. The Eighth Commandment requires us to exercise truth and charity in our words. We must speak the truth; simply speak kindly of our neighbours, hiding their faults when we can, and excusing them when they cannot be hidden, always striving to put the most charitable interpretation on his actions, and checking those who accuse or censure him. tempted to speak of the fault of another, we must examine if it be really necessary, if it will do good to reveal it, and if in our hearts we have real charity towards him. Should you have the misfortune to dislike anyone, never allow yourselves to speak about him, for you are pretty sure in so speaking to sin against charity.

'The worst of all calumny is to speak against priests. The devil succeeds but too often in persuading men to misinterpret words and actions of God's priests. Perhaps a priest has to reprove some under his charge, and instead of taking his correction with humility and reforming their life, they take a dislike to the good priest, and go about detracting his virtues and lowering him in the eyes of others. Still worse happens some-

times when Catholics of bad faith accuse priests of grave offences, either on no grounds at all, or on such slight evidence as in the case of the Protestant schoolmaster seeing the priest enter the publichouse. If you wish to avoid sin and win the favour of God, let priests alone; obey their directions, especially those given after confession; respect them, and pray for them, and they will be good Fathers to you, and you will be to them a crown of rejoicing in the last great day. Sometimes they are kind enough to visit you in your workroom, or to meet us in our little excursions. Receive them then and always with glad respect; kneel for their blessing, it is a great grace from God: reply simply; when they speak to you, but do not be forward in speaking to them. Remember they are God's anointed, and we must use great modesty and simplicity in all our dealings with them.

'We have thus discussed the offences against the Eighth Commandment to which we are most likely to be tempted, and the best safeguards against the devil's temptation; and we have work enough for the coming week in the effort to guard our tongues from injuring our neighbours.'





CHAPTER X.

NINTH COMMANDMENT.

HE girls assembled earlier on the following Sunday, for May had set in, and the weather was delightful, and Madam had

proposed that the afternoon should be spent in the open air—a proposal that was received with enthusiasm on all sides. The Home dinner was discussed at noon, and the externes managed by one means or another to get their mid-day meal in good time; and then the whole party set out together, and were met at Westminster Bridge by such members of the Society as found it easier to repair thither direct from their houses, and there they took boat for Greenwich. The sun shone brightly, the tide was in, the river was dotted all over with little crafts full of holiday-making people, who had only a chance of enjoying them-

selves once a week; everyone seemed happy and gay, and all the girls were in full enjoyment.

Though surrounded by her own party, Madam had full opportunity of observing the numerous fellow-travellers, young and old, who crowded the boat. There were girls such as her own, as well as many of lower class. With the anxious solicitude of a mother she conned each countenance, comparing others with those of her own circle; and while quiet mirthful chat went on among them, she rendered thanks to God for the modest expression in the sweet faces round her, so widely different from the roving, eager eyes, and evident effort to attract attention, of most of the other girls amusing themselves on the boat. Gertrude, the most recent recruit, had less of the recollected expression than the others, and her looks were oftener cast upon the public; so Madam kept her by her side, drawing her into conversation and pointing out to her, and two or three of the nearest, the various objects of interest on the river's banks.

Arrived at Greenwich, they sought a sequestered part of the Park in the Blackheath direction, where they could get a lovely view of the river and the country adjacent, and they sang, and talked, and told stories. It was best to have the singing first, lest the Park should get fuller, and then the singing would attract undesirable listeners. The Home

girls had learned a charming song from the French mistress, and they sang it now to the delight of all. The words give but poor indication of the charm of the song, which is for four voices, and chorus; the various voices breaking in with 'Cuckoo, cuckoo,' at all parts of the song, in such modulations of tone, as gave the idea of different cuckoos at varied distance.

'Quand l'été nous arrive, Le coucou chante aux bois : A sa chanson plaintive, J'aime a mêler ma voix— Coucou, coucou, coucou.'

Translation.

'When the summer comes,
The cuckoo sings all day;
And with the welcome bird
I love to join my lay—
Cuckoo, cuckoo, cuckoo.'

'Children's Voices,' were sung too, and 'The Good Old Catholic Times,' and 'Father, Come Home,' and many another ditty more or less familiar. Then the girls begged for the instruction.

'The Ninth Commandment forbids the class of sins in thought, which the sixth forbids in action. It is as if it were given as an advanced lesson to the child of God; the sixth having taught him to guard his actions, he is now instructed to guard also the fountain of action, the thoughts of his heart. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife;" I need not explain to you, who are able to reason, that this applies equally to the other sex. To us the commandment reads, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's husband;" and it forbids all immodest thoughts towards our brother man.

'You may think that this is a matter which none but yourselves can have knowledge of. A word I frequently hear girls use is, "My thoughts are my own;" in one sense they are, but in another sense they are the property of anotherof God, who sees and notes each one that passes through your brain; or of the devil, who tries to use that thought for his own purposes. They are your own, in the sense that you are not obliged to tell them, unless being against to-day's commandment, in which case they are matter for confession; but, even if silent, you cannot conceal them, your eves betray them. I consider your eyes as windows to your conscience, and when I look into the eyes of each one of you, I know if you are keeping your conscience pure.

Cries of 'Oh, Madam!' came from every side, and Gertrude hid her face in her hands; but Madam Margaret's happy expression in regarding her flock was a sure sign that she saw nothing

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in the 'windows' which gave her a heartache.

'Now, my dears,' she continued, 'you must allow me to be very tiresome, and point out to you the snares which the devil will hide all around you to entrap you into breaking this commandment.

'First, there are jests. You are light-hearted girls, thank God, and several of you have a great readiness for wit. Wit is a gift of God, and a great blessing. I regard it as a very good and charitable action to make people laugh. Laughing people are good-humoured, and good-humoured people break the law of charity much seldomer than ill-humoured people do. Good-humoured people are content, and often thankful. Illhumoured people do hundreds of little sins in grumbling and growling, and they are much more liable to think hardly of their neighbour; they are thus prompted to speak uncharitably, and also they are more subject to impure thoughts: so please understand in what I am going to say about jesting, that I love and value cheerfulness, and have a warm regard for innocent fun. But here the devil comes to meddle; he suggests to a witty girl an allusion to something immodest—the very impropriety makes the idea the more ludicrous. A modest-minded girl tries not to laugh; the others e her effort, and try to make her laugh in spite of

herself; they all go into fits of laughter at the conflict that they see, and fresh thoughts and words of a coarse kind come among the merriment. Now this kind of fun is the devil's wicked imitation of the innocent mirth which God loves. It is like the apples of Sodom which grow around the lakes of pitch, where the wicked cities were burned with fire from heaven—apples which are fair outside, and full of ashes within. No lightness of heart follows after this kind of fun, but a painful sense of soiled conscience and unrest. When you have had a good spell of innocent mirth you often come to tell me what funny things this and the other one said, and I enjoy it all over again with you; but you never tell me these dirty jokes, and I only know that there have been such by catching a word quoted from some low song, or by seeing a look of shame in the "windows" when next I visit you.

'Another indication of how you keep your thoughts, is your manner in the streets and in all public places. I see you many a time when you don't see me, and our Director sees you too, without your suspecting it. If a girl stands and looks around her, or without stopping keeps looking behind, or if she looks in the face of each passer-by, then we, who study girls, know that that poor child neither watches over her eyes nor her thoughts. God gave us sight, and touch, and taste, and hearing, and smell, to make us happy and

to enable us to love and honour Him; and the devil seizes hold of these five senses, and by one or other of them tries to draw us away from God, and alas! he succeeds in a great number of cases. He, our cruel enemy, puts bad sights in our way—immodest pictures, immodest scenes, these are to tempt the eyes to sin. Or he suggests the coarse joke, or the lewd song, to tempt the ears; the taste he tempts by excess of eating or of drinking, and so on. All self-indulgence helps his plans—scents, scenes in theatres, love of dress, all vanity, musichalls, and exciting songs, and drinking above all the rest.

'Our dear and all-loving Lord encompasses us with remedies and safeguards more surely than the enemy does with snares. The first safeguard is the sense of the presence of God. When walking in the streets, or chatting in your workroom, or having a merry game in recreation, recall to your minds the presence of God. It will not check your merriment; the laugh will be more hearty because the Great Father is there; the romp will be more vigorous, the walk more brisk, knowing that He is with you. This is called making an Act of the Presence of God, and by making such acts frequently you will get the habit of living, acting, speaking, and thinking in His recognised presence.

'I have heard of people, mature Christians, who have never lost the sense of God's presence for one

moment for years. This is the habit of all others that will most defend us from Satan's snares, and will ensure the largest amount of meritorious acts. You will be tired of hearing me praise self-control, yet I must bore you with it again, for it is the next best safeguard after the sense of God's presence. Get the habit of pausing before obeying the sudden thought; this will save you from silly looking about you, will guard your eyes, your ears, your appetite, your actions towards your friends, and your very thoughts. It gives a quiet power over yourselves, which is seen in your expression, in your way of walking, in your general appearance. These two safeguards will ensure success for you, and you have also the sweet help and example of our Blessed Lady to cheer and strengthen you. Do not be content with driving away silly and evil thoughts: seek to furnish your heart with good and strengthening ones. Think of our Blessed Lady, a girl like yourselves, only without sin; think of her doing the errands, applying herself to work, taking her innocent recreation, enjoying the beauty of God's creation, and the gladness of His creatures. Talk to her, and ask her to go with you here or there, ask her advice on this or that. She knows all you say to her, for she looks ever on the heart of God. and there all our thoughts are mirrored; and she will guard our purity as she guarded her own, and love and cherish your desires for good. Mary restores what Eve destroyed; Eve by her act of disobedience let in the floods of sin and shame, and turned our nature to evil, meriting the wrath of God; Mary by her act of obedience, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to Thy word"-Mary bore for us the Redeemer, who stemmed the floods of sin and shame, restored our nature by uniting it with His own, and satisfied the wrath of God. Our first mother set us a bad example, and left us an inheritance of ruin. Our second Mother set us an example of purity and holiness, and left us an inheritance of salvation. Busy your minds with thoughts of Mary; they follow on the Act of God's Presence, for she lived in it unceasingly on earth, and gazes now on His glory. You are called by her name, be true Children of Mary in internal purity of heart, and external modesty and recollection. This will be a good exercise for this month which we begin to-day, the month of Mary.'

It was time to go down to the town for tea. They had brought tea and sugar, and easily hired a room, and got hot water, fresh bread-and-butter, and a good measure of shrimps, so it was quite a feast. Then they went to the neighbouring chapel for Benediction, delighted to get the chance of the legendary 'three graces' for adoring Our Lord in a chapel for the first time. It was such a happy beginning of Mary's month.



CHAPTER XI.

TENTH COMMANDMENT.



HE following Sunday was wet and foggy, and no one had any desire for outdoor recreation; but they amused themselves

by planning something very cheery for the Feast of the Ascension, when they could have a fair field for fun; as but few of the Protestant work-people are at large on that day, and so the places of amusement are never crowded. The externes were ambitious to learn the Home girls' French songs, so they beguiled the time till the instruction, in practising them.

'Si j'étais grande dame, Je voudrais tous les jours Aux pauvres qui réclame, Offrir un doux secours. Je voudrais de me vie,
Charmant les courts instants,
Etre la blonde amie
De tous les cœurs souffrants.

Chorus.

'Mais je n'ai rien sur terre A donner aux malheurs, Que ma sainte priere Et l'amour de mon cœur.

'Si j'étais grande dame,
Oubliant ma splendeur,
Je voudrais que mon âme
Fut entière aux malheurs.
Puis sous ma sainte Egide,
Prenant les orphelins,
Je sérais leur bon guide
Dans les sombres chemins.

Chorus—' Mais je n'ai rien sur terre.

'Si j'étais grande dame, Le dimanche au saint lieu, J'irai, moi faible femme, Pour chacun prier Dieu. Et le soir dans la fête, Où les cœurs sont joyeux, J'irais faire la quête, Pour tous les malheureux.

Chorus-' Mais je n'ai rien sur terre.

Translation.

'Were I a great lady,
I would go every day
To help save the poor
And offer them aid.

I would my life long,
Charming each instant,
Be the fair friend
Of all the unfortunate.

Chorus.

'But I have nothing on earth
To give to the needy,
But my holy prayer
And the love of my heart.

Were I a great lady, Forgetting my splendour, I would give my mind To none but the suffering. Then under my kind roof I would gather the orphans, And be their good guide In their saddened path.

Chorus-' But I have nothing on earth, etc.

'Were I a great lady,
In church on a Sunday,
I would, though but a weak woman,
Pray God's mercy for all.
And the nights of great fètes,
When all hearts are joyous,
I would make a collection
For all who are suffering.

Chorus—'But I have nothing on earth,' etc.

The girls gathered round the table for the instruction, or grouped themselves still nearer their teacher, for they were now too numerous to be able to get to the table. They felt a little anxious, having come to the last commandment, and wondering what would be done afterwards.

Madam Margaret called upon the youngest present to repeat the commandment.

'Tenth Commandment: Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods.'

'This commandment addresses itself to the fountain of action, the thoughts, just as the last one did, and guards against the full-formed crime of theft. Coveting is such a common sin that we hardly know when we commit it. I wish you would help me by yourselves seeking out some of the occasions which you find for breaking this commandment.'

- 'Shop windows,' were spoken by several voices.
 - 'Milliners' windows,' said Gertrude, softly.
- 'Fruit stalls,' said Rose, Agnes, and Nora; 'and pastrycooks,' added the last.
 - 'Flower gardens,' said Clare.
 - 'The Catholic Repository,' said Minnie.
- 'There are occasions which I don't know how to describe,' said Clare. 'Wishing one could walk or dance like somebody.'
- 'That is hardly coveting, unless you put it thus: "I wish I had that man's power of walking," and even then you would not wish to take it from the other. Coveting includes two things—wishing to

possess something one's self, and wishing to take it from another.'

- 'I don't want to take away the people's bonnets, only to have some like them,' said Gertrude.
 - 'I only want some fruit,' said Rose.
- 'And I some statues and pictures,' said Minnie.
- 'Then your dangers come under the head of occasions of discontent. The Holy Scriptures give us an example of coveting. The wicked King Achab had fields and parks and woods and gardens, and a poor man had one little field, lying well to the sun, close to Achab's favourite garden, and the king wanted to have it for a garden of herbs. It had belonged to the poor man's fore-fathers, and he would not sell it to the king. Achab went on longing for it till he made himself quite ill, and his queen, who was more boldly wicked than himself, had the man killed, that the king might have his field.'

'That was real wicked,' said Nora. 'That had queen would have to go to hell!'

- 'She certainly would unless she repented—and the Scripture further tells us that she died a violent and shameful death.'
- 'Serve her right,' said two or three, under their voices.
 - 'Discontent is another way of breaking the

commandment. I picture myself occupied beside you in your various workrooms, and I hear such remarks as these: "I am sick of this work;" "Why was I not born a lady?" "I wish I could go out riding in a carriage;" "I wish I was that lady on horseback;" "People are now getting ready to go to the play-I wish I was one of them;" "I wish this gown was for me;" "I wish I was going to the ball, instead of this lady;" "I wish it was recreation-time, for I hate work." It is much the same downstairs on some occasions: "I wish people would get up and light their own fires;" "I wish I could dress myself up and go out;" "I wish I had such a dress—such a bonnet;" "I wish I could follow that music," or, "go to that circus." Dear children, all this is very, very natural with Eve's sin planted in our hearts, but, oh! it is very, very, very silly.

'Let me put before you the antidote. Think of the long, long ages of eternity, the horrible sufferings of those endless years in hell, the joy and gladness of unending pleasure in heaven. God the Father loved and loves each one of us with a love greater and stronger than that of parents, lovers, and friends, all put together. Before a child is born into the world God considers what way is the best in which to train him, so as to enable him to escape hell and gain heaven. The earthly father who prepares a noble estate for his child, builds him a fine house, gets horses ready for him, and cattle and servants and everything to make his life most enjoyable, does nothing in comparison with what God the Father does for each child born into the world. He prepares possessions and friends and joys in heaven, far beyond anything that an earthly queen has. But before He will give all this to His child. He does what earthly parents do-He sends him to school. This is our school-time, children, yours and mine. It would be quite easy to God to give Gertrude all the bonnets she sees, and Rose all the fruit, and Minnie all the statues and pictures, but He sees that they would be hindrances in the way of gaining the big prize of all heaven.

'Only think, girls, think and wonder, but believe in the stupendous love of God. Each one of you is as dear in His eyes as the Queen of England or the Emperor of Germany. He makes you servants, or sewing girls, or governesses in His great school here; not to snub you, or demean you, but because that is the way that your soul can be trained for the great glory hereafter. Try to believe this, and to love God very, very warmly, and that will check your discontents. Flesh and blood is liable to weariness and disgust, it is no sin in you to be tired of work and to long for air, but it is weak and cowardly to murmur against God. Turn your thoughts to Jesus, Who was faint and

weary for our sakes, and say in your hearts: "Though I am sick of sewing, I will persevere in it for love of Jesus;" say: "Other girls of my age can ride and play, and I have to work; but the loving God wills it so, and I will try to love His will." Treat your rising discontents thus, and you will have no need to envy the duchess's necklace of diamonds, for of every such act of love and confidence, a jewel, brighter than any diamond, is formed, which will shine through all eternity, reflecting the glory of God, and increasing your happiness.

'The desire of money is also forbidden by this commandment. The apostle says: "The love of money is the root of all evil." It is a very encroaching passion, and often gets extraordinary dominion over a man. I have myself known a person live for years in the most miserable poverty, sleeping on the bare floor and eating sparingly of the coarsest food; in old age she begged in the roads, and was clothed in rags. She died in utter misery, and in a bag tied about her person was a sum of nearly two hundred pounds! She had lived a false life, burdened her conscience with innumerable lies, forgotten her God, and all to amass money which she could not use.

'On the other hand, we find in the "Lives of the Saints" examples of contentment as striking as was that I have cited of covetousness. One holy old beggar sitting weary by the roadside saw a brave gentleman pass, who wished him a "good day."

"All days are good to me, sir!" said the beggar.

"What!" exclaimed the cavalier; "you, who are so badly clothed, can you call the day good when it rains, or blows, or freezes?"

"Oh yes!" said the beggar; "all days are good, and all weathers, for they are all sent by God, and what they do to us is done by His holy Will."

'The Tenth Commandment enjoins contentment upon us, but we can only practise this, as indeed we can only obey any of the commandments, by the help of God's grace. The poor sometimes, nay, very often, find it hard to be contented; but that is because they look downward and not upward. When the Son of God came down to earth He was free to choose His position. He could have made His Mother queen of earth, as He has since made her Queen of Heaven; He could have had thousands of attendants, and chariots, and horses, and all the pomp of a mighty king. But He chose a poor girl to be His Mother; He chose a manger as his first cradle; He chose a cottage for His home, and a life of labour instead of luxury. After St. Joseph's death He had not even a roof over His head, or a home to call his own—and why? Be-

cause He wished to show us that poverty and labour are the nearest way to heaven. Poverty is His uniform. "He was rich, and for our sakes became poor." The devil tempts the poor less than the rich, their sins are fewer, their responsibility far less. God has a very tender sympathy with the griefs of the poor; and for every trial they bear with patience He lays up golden rewards in heaven. I don't say that a wicked poor man is happy; but a poor man, or woman, or girl, who gives his heart to God, and tries to be contented for love of Him, is very happy indeed. In this life he has a good conscience, peace and content. and in the next a stupendous reward. The knowledge of God's love and care should make you content: the hope of the glad home above should make you more than content.

'To secure you this contentment, I prescribe the old remedy—Acts of the Presence of God, little words of prayer to God—"Jesus, I do this for the love of Thee;" "Lord, give me patience;" and the morning devotion of giving the first thought to God. Thus the mind gets the habit of turning to God; and being much in God's company, it gets to see things as God sees them, and to realise what St. Paul tells us—"Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us an exceeding great and eternal weight of glory."

'Thus we seem to finish our chats about God's

commandments as we began them. - The first thought given to God is the beginning of the faithful keeping of the commandments for the day. It is the arming of the soldier; the offering of the thoughts, words, and actions of the day to God; the morning prayer; the frequently recurring Act of the Presence of God; the oft-renewed intention, "All for Thee;" the courageous resistance of profane words; little acts of obedience, of honesty, of kindness; steady resistance to every impure or unjust thought—these things make up a harvest-day in which many sheaves are gathered in towards our eternal reward. I said, in beginning, that every day is a day of battle, and I repeat it now; but remember the vision granted to the servant of Elias. The man saw a great army come and encamp all round the city-come on purpose to take and to kill his beloved master. He was sore dismayed; but Elias prayed to God to open the man's eyes to see spiritual things, and he saw an army of angels, far more numerous than the enemies, that were protecting the prophet.

'So it is with us, my dear children. We are encompassed with enemies, and we have a traitor within our hearts, but we have an all-powerful Protector. Almighty God is our shield, His armies of angels encamp around us; the Blessed Virgin spreads her mantle over us, and the saints in heaven watch the conflict, and cheer us on to

victory; they show us the palms that they have won, and urge us on to fight and not to grow faint; they sympathise in our struggle, and wait to welcome us when the fight is over and the victory won.

'Sing to me now "Angels of Jesus."'

'Hark, hark! my soul, angelic songs are ringing
O'er earth's green fields and ocean's wave-washed shore,
How sweet the song those holy lips are singing,
Of that dear time when sin shall be no more.
Angels of Jesus, Angels of light,
Singing to welcome the pilgrims of the night.





CHAPTER XII.

COMMANDMENTS OF THE CHURCH.

ONE of the girls had been able to find out what subject the Directress would take after the Ten Commandments. Minnie

was of opinion that she would go on to the Sacraments, as she used to do in preparing the school-children for First Communion; but Ethel and Eleanor thought that she would go on to the Commandments of the Church. When the younger ones came in they began with the same question, and then the elders replied:

'Wait and see; it is a good lesson of patience.'

When Madam came in she sat down in the midst of the group, and asked what they were so serious about; and then Elsie said:

'We are wanting to know what to-day's instruction will be about.'

- 'When we have had our father's advice, whose are we likely to seek next, Elsie?'
 - ' Mother's.'
- 'And if God is our Father, who is the Mother of our souls in this world?'
 - 'The Blessed Virgin,' said one.
 - 'The Catholic Church,' said another.
- 'It is of our Mother the Church that I am now speaking-our visible Mother. The Church is our guardian as well as our Mother. Before Christ went back to His Father in heaven He taught His Apostles to administer the Sacraments, and to teach Christian doctrine. They were to be the foundation of His Church. He had loved His own when He was in the world, and He loved them to the end. His loving heart could not be happy in heaven with His Father and the holy angels if He had left His little ones on earth without anvone to take care of them. So he took St. Peter first, and told him he was the rock on which he would build His Church; and the gates of hell, that is the devil and all his army, should never prevail against her, and He gave Him the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. He endowed him with authority to be Head of the Church, and He gave him the power that we call jurisdiction — the power to ordain those that should be his successors, and to dispense the treasures of the Church. This was the special charge to St. Peter.

Who can tell me who is the successor of St. Peter in the present day V

- 'The Pope,' replied many voices.
- 'Yes, the Pope is the visible Head of the Church, as St. Peter was. Who is the invisible Head?'
 - 'Jesus Christ.'
- 'Now tell me in what the Pope differs from other bishops and priests.'
 - 'He is the master of them all,' said Frances.
 - 'And why?'
- 'Because Christ gave St. Peter the keys, and he left them to one Pope after another,' said Minnie.
- 'But the Pope does not give the keys himself!' exclaimed Frances, vivaciously. 'When Pope Pius died a new Pope had to be chosen; so it was not the old Pope who chose the new.'
- 'Perfectly true. Can you remember what Christ gave to His Apostles collectively—I mean what He gave to them altogether, and not to St. Peter alone?'
 - 'His Holy Spirit,' said one.
- ' 'The promise of the Holy Ghost,' said another.
 - 'The promise of His own presence,' said a third.
- 'He laid His hands on them, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost;" and afterwards He said, "I will send the Paraclete from the Father," and "Wait for the Promise of the Father." Also He said, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the consummation of all things." He particularly avoided

saying that St. Peter should not die, or that any one of them should not die: the only presence that He promised to continue always in the Church was His own and that of the Holy Ghost. The gift of the Holv Ghost was to the Apostles collectively and individually. Thus, when a Pope dies, it is the Holy Ghost who governs the Church until a new Pope is appointed, and such appointment rests with Him. But as God speaks to us by the voice of man while we are in this world. so He chooses a Pope by inspiring His appointed creatures. You remember how solemnly the Conclave met together when the election of the new Pope was made; it was formed of men on whom the gift of the Holy Ghost had been conferred in Holy Orders, and who had also received St. Peter's special gift of authority or jurisdiction. You remember how many prayers were said to the Holy Ghost all over the world by the vast family of the faithful, orphaned of their visible Father; and how, when the choice was made, all the world-Protestant as well as Catholic-accepted the new Pope as the chosen of God, and the children of the Church began their glad thanksgivings that they had again a Father. We shall none of us easily forget the Mass of thanksgiving, the silver trumpets, the Te Deum of joy, nor the warm words of exhortation and congratulation of our Director. All these manifestations were acts of faith in God's presence

in the Church, in the action of the Holy Ghost in the appointment of Christ's Vicar.

'Now I want you to tell me why the Pope is called the Vicar of Christ.'

'I know,' said Lydia. 'At the Franciscan Monastery, when the father-guardian is away, the vicar is the master. The Pope is master, because Jesus Christ is away.'

'But did not Christ promise that He would always remain in His Church?'

'Yes, Madam; but we can't see Him.'

'Just so, dear Lydia; but Christ is always with us hidden in the tabernacle, but not acting as Governor of the Church. To exercise our faith, it is His will to remain invisible, and He gives us the Pope as our spiritual head. Now, I want some of you to tell me what is meant by the "power of the keys"?'

'The authority of binding and loosing,' said Laura, one of the oldest of the Home girls.

'But have not all priests the power of binding and loosing?'

'Yes, Madam, of course they have.'

'Then how is it that the "power of the keys" was the special gift to St. Peter?

Edith leaned forward.

'I heard a sermon on that,' she said. 'The preacher told us that every priest received the power of binding and loosing at his ordination, but

that he could not use this power until he got permission from his bishop. He said that every bishop had the right to give this permission in his own diocese, because he had jurisdiction over all things spiritual in his diocese; but that the bishop himself received this jurisdiction from the Pope, because he is the head, and all jurisdiction must be derived from him. Thus we see, said the preacher, every priest gets the right to use his power of binding and loosing from his bishop, and every bishop gets the right of using his own power of binding and loosing, and of giving his priests permission to use theirs, from the Pope; and so it is, he added, that the "power of the keys" was a special gift to St. Peter. I remember he said that all this was such a puzzle for the Anglican clergy, who start hearing confessions just because they think they will, without any bishop's leave, and that that was all nonsense?

'You have remembered the instruction so well, Edith, that I venture to lead you on to another difficult point. What are the "treasures of the Church," of which Christ gave the keys to the Pope?

'I can't explain that, Madam, but I remember that you said one day lately that Jesus had won countless treasures of merit by His life and sufferings, all of which are stored up in heaven for His family. I suppose those are the "treasures," but I don't know how the Pope keeps them.'

'Those are truly the treasures that are given to the charge of the Vicar of Christ, and to them God permits His saints also to contribute. I have already shown you how, in the loving mercy of God, He lets His children take part in His work, just as a tender father or mother lets a toddling child take hold of the basket, as if its little strength could be of real help; but the child is pleased, and becomes more lovingly united to the parent, and learns the way to help him when full strength comes. There have been saints, such as St. Aloysius, who never committed a mortal sin, yet devoted their life to penance to make reparation for the sins of others; the merits of such saints God permits to be thrown into the treasury, already so munificently furnished by His divine Son. Other saints, though once sinners, have lived such heroic lives of devotion, that they also have had works of supererogation, which God has deigned to accept for His treasury, and the Pope has a key to all this wealth. You hear preachers speak of plenary indulgences and of partial indulgences, and you try to gain such, do you not?

'Oh yes, Madam; Father Lewis told me to try to get all the indulgences possible. There was a plenary indulgence at Easter for all who went to confession and Communion, and the same on all the great feasts.'

'Quite right, Edith, and what do we get by the plenary indulgence?'

'The forgiveness of all the temporal punishment due to our sins,' replied Edith, brightly.

'Yes, dear, and there is a special kind of forgiveness in the "indulgence." In confession, if truly sorry, you get all your mortal sins forgiven as to the eternal punishment, but there is a temporal punishment that you still undergo. The penance helps towards paying this temporal debt, and all voluntary penances help towards it, but we can never know that it is wholly paid. Also, in confession, you get forgiveness for any venial sin that you confess and are truly sorry for; but very often we are not sufficiently sorry for venial sins, and then they are unforgiven, and a temporal debt still remains—all such debts unpaid have to be paid in purgatory. "Amen, I say to you, you shall not go hence till you have paid the very last mite." Here then comes the grace of indulgences. The Vicar of Christ has the power to take from the treasury of the merits of Christ, a grace that is called an indulgence. At the great feasts he distributes to the children of the Church, who are contrite and united to her invisible Head, Jesus Christ, in Holy Communion, enough of this grace to free them from all temporal punishment due to

sin up to that hour; this is called a plenary indulgence. The Pope, moved by the Spirit of God, further distributes lesser portions of this divine grace for lesser good works. He encourages the children of the Church to practise certain devotions, such as Making the Way of the Cross, saying the Rosary, praying before a crucifix, and meditating on the Passion of Christ, by promising as a reward an indulgence for 100 days, 300 days, etc.; that is to say, as much forgiveness of the temporal punishment due to sin as could be gained by 100 days of hard penance, or 300 days, as the case may be. But mark well, my dears, no one in mortal sin can touch the graces from the treasury of the Church; the sentence of death due to mortal sin must be remitted, the full purpose of reformation must be registered, before an indulgence comes within reach. And here again our loving Lord offers a new means for His children to cooperate with Him. Just as in His condescension He allows the saints to drop their mites into the treasury. He permits even us poor sinners to cooperate in His desire to release the holy souls pining in Purgatory, by giving to them our indulgences, and so hastening the payment of their debt and liberation.

'But if we give them our indulgences, how are we to get our own debt paid?' asked Laura.

^{&#}x27;A very sensible question, Laura. We are not

bound thus to give what we ourselves need, but in proportion as we love and try to follow the steps of our divine Lord, we imbibe His spirit, and wish to share with those He so dearly loves all the benefits that come to us. But there is no denying that in so doing we deprive ourselves. Still, to please Jesus, and win a smile from Him, it is even worth while to stay a little longer in Purgatory.

'We have now considered the special mission contided to St. Peter and to his successors, the Vicars of Christ. Other graces were conferred on all the Apostles in the commission which constitutes the grace of Holy Orders. The power of forgiving sins, of baptizing, and giving the Holy Eucharist, of anointing the sick, and solemnising matrimony, is given to all priests—that of conferring Holy Orders and Confirmation to bishops only.

'But see how our Blessed Lord thus furnished His Church with means to support His family throughout all ages. He knew that every poor infant comes into the world a slave to sin, and under the power of the devil; therefore he ordained the Sacrament of Baptism, by which the stain of sin is removed, the chains of the devil broken, and the child transferred from the dominion of Satan to the family of God. He knew that even after baptism the child's nature would have a tendency to sin, and would betray

the castle of its heart to the enemy again and again; so he ordained the Sacrament of Penance, by which His Blood is applied to the repentant soul as often as it is in need, and the lost favour of God is restored. He knew that faith given in bartism would grow weak by contact with the world and sin, that obedience would grow faint, and the devil would gain on the enfeebled virtues of the child; so He ordained Confirmation, by which the Holy Ghost would be invoked, and the child changed from a feeble infant into a good soldier of Christ. He knew that even afterwards the Catholic would be weary and faint in the unceasing conflict of life, and would be in daily need of support; so He ordained the Holy Eucharist to feed, and nourish, and strengthen all his warring family, young and old; to sustain them all with His own flesh and blood; to support their weakness with His divine strength; to console them in all their pains and griefs, and to change them into His image. He knew how great difficulties and dangers come in married life; what terrible sin and alienation from God is possible; what great glory can come to God from the mutual aid in all goodness of those united in life; what possibilities of grace and glory in time and eternity to the children by good training; what horrors of sin and ruin by evil example and education; so He ordained the Sacrament of Matrimony to bring

the virtue of His Blood on the door-posts of the married life, and the grace of the Holy Spirit on the married state. He knew that His family could not enter spiritual life, nor regain it if lost, nor grow up to manhood, nor be healthy and strong, without the sacraments and teaching; so he gave the Sacrament of Orders to admit into the priestly office men whose hearts He had prepared to feed His flock.

'And he well knew that the devil never despairs of ruining a soul; and though thwarted all through life by the generosity and ingenuity of grace, he will yet concentrate all his efforts on a last struggle, hoping that as all forces, physical and mental, faint and fade in the hour of death, he may carry his point in a last cruel effort; and so the dving Catholic is fiercely tempted and assailed by all the powers of evil together-now tempted to self-sufficiency-now terrified nearly to despair: therefore Our Lord ordained the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, by which His blood, flowing over the tormented soul, washing away every stain of sin, every point on which the devil can seize, fortifying the dying Christian by a special grace of the Holy Ghost, which makes him invulnerable to the shafts of Satan, and calling round his dying bed the spirits of saints and angels, the noble army of the martyrs, and the most dear presence of Jesus, till the spirit sinks to rest, and is carried by

his guardian angel to the visible presence of Him whose invisible presence has been his dearest rest on earth.

'Thus has Christ furnished for us a Church, to be our guardian, our Mother; to nourish, to support, to educate, to arm us, and to train us for the home of heaven and for the company of the saints and angels, and of God Almighty, our First Beginning and our Last End. This is the Church who claims authority over us—claims it because Christ gave it. We gladly and lovingly submit ourselves to such authority, loving it for the sake of Him who gave it, and because our souls need it; and we attend to the commandments of the Church, knowing them to be at the same time the commandments of Christ.'





CHAPTER XIII.

FIRST COMMANDMENT OF THE CHURCH.

SCENSION DAY came, and the glorious weather gave every facility for the full enjoyment that the girls had long planned.

They all rose very early, mastering the reluctance most of them felt to be alert on a holiday; but they had been practising the brisk uprising, and already they found the benefit of a good habit, for it was comparatively easy to rise early now. Bertha, Edith, Kate, Gertrude, and little Nora had planned to go out very early to the church, so as to hear Mass and make a fervent Communion before their companions had done snoring, then they had to return to work. But they had coaxed a half-holiday out of their mistresses, which was a very great favour, seeing that the season was a very busy one; but they promised to make up the time after, and

as they had shown themselves trustworthy girls they were trusted.

They worked with diligence after breakfast, but were counting the hours till they should be free to go to join their friends.

The Home girls also rose early, and for the Such of them as had friends in the same purpose. neighbourhood went to pay them a visit after breakfast. One who had a sick baby-sister gave up the excursion and everything to go and nurse her all day; but all who had no special reason of charity for staying away, went to the High Mass to unite in the spirit of joy diffused through the whole Church, and to sympathise with our dear Lord in His glad reunion with the Father. Dinner was served the moment the girls returned from Mass, and ere it was over, the most of the externes arrived. Only Minnie and Henrietta and some of the more experienced servants had to join the rest later at Hampstead Heath. They took baskets of provisions with them, and all the halfpence they could get together. Their kind Director sent a handsome gift for the general expenses, and the party set out in a thoroughly jubilant spirit. Arrived at the Heath, they chose their place for supper, and then left their baskets in the charge of a woman who had a ginger-beer stall; then they had famous games, 'Baggage,' 'Hunt the Hare,' and 'French and English.' Then the last stragglers arrived, and the grand donkey-ride took place. Madam had the pleasure of seeing her whole family, including the mistresses, mounted upon donkeys. Off they went at a merry trot; the exhilaration of the air and motion prompted the French mistress to sing, and her clear voice was heard getting more and more distant, as she sang her favourite mountain song. The Directress watched and listened till mademoiselle's 'La, la, la, la, la,' faded out of hearing, and the slowest donkey disappeared from her sight; then she sat down to think and muse till her flock should reappear.

They all begged for a very early supper, and in the meanwhile for a talk and the promised instructions; only they begged that Madam would not be hard on them to-day, as it was so great a feast.

'We could not have a more appropriate occasion, my children, for studying the First Commandment of the Church, which requires us "to keep certain holydays holy, with the obligation of resting from servile works," this being one of the holydays. It is on account of the Church having given this commandment that such days are called holydays of obligation; we are obliged to hear Mass on these days, and to rest from servile work.'

'That was good of the Church,' said Nora. 'I pity the Protestants, to have no such holydays.'

'I pity them too, Nora, because in most cases it is not their own fault. Those who themselves throw off the authority of the Church are worthy of no pity in losing her tender care. The Church has power to ordain such holydays, or to remove the obligation, according as the Spirit of God, ever dwelling in the Church, reveals the suitability to men's needs. Her motive in ordaining them is easily understood; she wished to bring constantly before her children the various leading events in the life of our Redeemer, and to infuse into them the spirit of the saints.

'The Church's year begins, as you are all aware, with Advent. She then bids her children prepare for the coming of Christ in the flesh, the Incarnation. Very early in Advent comes the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, when the children of the Church are called upon to contemplate the brilliant grace of Our Lady's purity. Wearied and saddened as we are by the sight of sin on every side, what gladness to Godloving men and to holy angels to see a creature free from the stain of original sin, and shining in perfect purity through her stainless life!

'It is as a note of preparation for the Birth of Christ, to fix our minds on the precious vessel prepared to receive Him, "full of grace," all ready and waiting to become the Mother of the Son of God. We pause from our daily tasks and approach the sacraments with hope and joy, to thank God worthily for His grace to Mary, and to beseech Him to make us, by a renewed nature, her children in holiness and purity.

'The rest of Advent is devoted to preparation for the coming Guest; our hearts must be purified by penance, we must contemplate our sin and danger, and the coming of Christ to judgment, that we may break off all evil habits, and renew all good resolutions. Then comes the happy Feast. Our hearts, willingly following the guidance of Mother Church, after contemplating with her the ruin and the loss, beat with joy at the angels' song, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good-will." Oh yes! though we are weak and erring, our wills are set to serve God on earth, and live for ever with Him in heaven; and we hasten to the crib to adore our new-born Lord, and unite our hearts with those of Mary and Joseph in tender reverential love. The glad Christmas Feast past, the Church will not let us forget our Infant Saviour, but leads us to enter into the spirit of the three Kings, and accompany them across mountain and valley, ever keeping our eyes on the guiding star, till we arrive with them in the stable where the infant King of kings lies in the arms of His stainless Mother. Up to that eventful day God's revelations had been made to the Jews only-they were the Church of God, the keepers of His treasures; but the three Kings, faithful to the illumination God sent into their hearts, came as representatives of the Gentiles, and attained to the very Presence of the Lord. They knelt in humble adoration, and presented to Him gifts of what they held most dear. Well does Mother Church teach us, on the Feast of the Epiphany, to lay aside our daily work, draw near to Him by the Holy Sacraments, and along with the three Kings, offer to our Incarnate Lord our hearts, our possessions, and our powers. We, being Gentiles, love this feast; it is the commemoration of our own acceptance into the Church of God. Soon the Church calls her children to a long period of mourning for sin. In preparation for the great Feast of Easter, she requires all the faithful to purge their souls by fasting, and renew their fervour by prayer. Later, we shall discuss more fully the reason of this. She calls them to dwell much on the sufferings of our dear Lord; to go. with Him to His last supper: to pray beside Him in the garden; to accompany Him to the judgmenthall-see His scourging-His crowning with thorns, and all the insults heaped upon Him; to follow Him with the beloved disciple to the Cross, and stand beside Him there, with the few faithful watchers. Then burst forth the glad "Alleluia" of the Easter morn, and we hasten, holding fast our Mother's hand, to the sacramental union with our

risen Lord, and feel that He calls us by our name as He did the penitent and loving Mary. A pause ensues while week by week the Church leads us to the lake side, or the upper room to join the disciples, and receive with them Our Lord's "Peace be unto you;" and then comes to-day's feast, the Ascension. Christ's work was finished on the Cross. but in His generosity He went down into Limbo, to the "spirits in prison," and came again and again to strengthen the heart of the future pastors of His Church—renewing His commission to give absolution and to teach, and His promise to be with and help them. He appeared to confirm the faith of St. Thomas, to lay upon St. Peter His threefold injunction to "Feed His sheep," and finally, He gathered His Apostles together for their last instruction, in which he renewed every charge and every promise; and then a bright cloud appeared, and He rose in it and disappeared into Then a vision of angels was granted to the bereaved Apostles, promising them that this same Jesus should come again in the very manner that He had gone from them. Thus was fulfilled His prediction: "I go My way to Him that sent Me:" "I go to My Father." It was a day of sorrow to the Apostles, for they lost sight of Him whom their soul loved; but it is a day of gladness to us. We rejoice with our dear Lord that His Passion and His Cross are for ever past, that the

grave and grave-clothes know Him no more, but that He is seated for ever on the right-hand of God; and we rejoice for ourselves, for He has said, "Where I am, there shall you be also;" and we hope in His Word, and look for salvation and eternal rest according to His promise. After the Feast of the Ascension a few days of waiting and preparation are again given to the children of the Church, and then the glorious Feast of Pentecost bursts upon them. Along with the disciples, we wait and pray for the gift of the Holy Ghost; He loves to be sought and invited to the hearts of men, and to those who seek Him, He repeats the miracle of Pentecost, descending unseen into their hearts along with Jesus in the sacramental bread, and filling their souls with courage. Then comes the crowning Feast of the Incarnation, loved by Jesus and His Church, and desired as dearly as the first Eucharistic supper was desired; what we call the Feast of Corpus Christi, and the French call Feast of God. This Feast is appointed by the Church to honour and commemorate the great Sacrament of the New Law, the perpetual miracle of the Feeding of Thousands. God gave to St. Peter the charge to feed His sheep, and St. Peter and his successors, on seeing the millions constituting the children of the Church, might well say as of old, "Whence shall we find bread to feed this multitude?" The Feast of Corpus Christi gives

the answer. Wherever the Catholic Church exists. -in all countries, in all ages-the miracle is daily repeated in every town and village, the bread is turned into the Body of Christ, and the family of God live and grow strong by feeding on that sacred Body and Blood. Therefore it is that we make communions of thanksgiving on this feast. and go in procession, following the Blessed Sacrament, and strewing flowers before It. In Catholic countries It is carried through all the streets, the houses are dressed with garlands and draperies, the bands play, and the people follow in holiday attire; all, whether in the streets or in the houses, kneel as It passes, and the soldiers present arms to It as to their King. This feast concludes the series in honour of the Redeemer. Then come three in honour of the saints. The first Feast is that of St. Peter and St. Paul-St. Peter, the first Vicar of Christ, and the Prince and Father of the Church; and St. Paul, the first Apostle to the Gentiles. Just as the three Kings were the first Gentiles admitted into the Church of God, so St. Paul was the first missioner who went forth with authority to call the Gentiles into Christ's fold. had been taught in a dream that God now willed the Gentiles to share in the redemption of mankind, and He converted St. Paul on purpose that he should go and preach to them. Both spent their lives in preaching Jesus; both were punished and imprisoned for His sake. St. Peter was set at liberty by an angel, who struck off his chains and opened the prison-doors. St. Paul was imprisoned, and scourged, but even in his pain he sang praises to God. He was scourged twice afterwards; he was stoned; he was shipwrecked; he made wearisome journeys; he was ill-used—betrayed. St. Peter converted three thousand by his first sermon; St. Paul converted great numbers, and planted the Church in many countries, and both were martyrs for the Faith. We honour the statue of St. Peter on the day of his Feast, and kiss his foot to show our submission to the authority Christ gave him. "Upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against her."

'The second feast in honour of the saints is that of the Assumption of our Blessed Lady. The Church teaches that some years after the death of Christ His Holy Mother died also, and that her soul was at once assumed into heaven. Her body was buried; but there has ever been a tradition in the Church, which all Catholics piously believe, though it is not an article of faith, that her divine Son would not allow the body of her from whom He had taken flesh and blood to see corruption; so He sent His angels to take that sinless body from the tomb, and bring it to His heavenly presence. This feast is full of consolation to the waiting Church, showing the tender fidelity of our Saviour

God, His tenderness to human ties, His devoted love to the Mother that gave Him birth. Parents rejoice to know how the God of heaven honours the parental relationship; children rejoice in His holy sympathy. The whole Church rejoices in the honour put upon one who is the Church's Mother as well as Christ's; and all turn with confidence to her mediation who sits for ever at the feet of her divine Son—daughter of God the Father, spouse of the Holy Ghost, Mother of the Son of God.

'The Feast of All Saints is in honour of the whole Church Triumphant—patriarchs, prophets, martyrs, popes, priests, religious, parents, children, kings, queens, servants, the great multitudes which no man can number, who have died in the grace of God, and finished paying their debts of temporal punishment in Purgatory. These are our patrons and protectors, our kind and revered friends, our future companions. They watch from their glad home in the presence of God all our conflict here. They have no contempt in their holy souls; they love the little servant or work-girl as well as they love a king or queen; they are glad to help in our different ties, and they are so condescending as to do lots of things for us, small as well as great. St. Anthony often finds lost things to please those who ask his help; others cure sick horses; others interest themselves in those who work at certain

trades—not by their own power, but because Almighty God loves to let them work with Him, as He has said, "Them that honour Me, I will honour." We pray, "All ye saints of God, make intercession for us;" and we also pray for special things to St. Joseph, or St. Anthony, or St. Francis, or St. Benedict, according as God enables us to form friendships with the perfected ones above.

'Such are the holydays of obligation on which we are allowed rest and amusement in all which is not sin. You may ride donkeys, go in swings, sing, shout, play; but you may not get drunk, or curse, or swear, or lie, or steal. It would be an extra sin if it was done on a holyday. Now let us spread out our supper, and there will be time for a good swing for each before we go home.'

The supper was very welcome. The goodwill of the woman who had kept the basket was rewarded by the quantity of ginger-pop which they bought. Then they went to the swings, but two or three were afraid to swing, and several turned sick on them. So they sat apart with Madam, and she told them stories while the others got a good toss.

They returned in time for Benediction, and enjoyed the beautiful ceremony with all their hearts.



CHAPTER XIV.

SECOND COMMANDMENT OF THE CHURCH.



HE girls were talking together in the parlour, and Edith and her companions were questioning little Rose when

Madam joined them. Rose ran to her.

- 'Please come here, Madam! Edith and Bertha are asking me such odd questions. They want to know why we prayed so hard for the soul of Pope Pius; for surely if he could forgive sins and grant indulgences he must have been free from sin himself.'
- 'Please, Madam,' said Edith, respectfully, 'as the Pope is infallible he is bound to be without sin—is he not?'
- 'Nothing can be more natural than that you five converts should have that idea. Rose being a little born Catholic, knows that it is not so, but

can't say why. Come here, Frances; it is good for you to join this discussion. Tell me if the officer who has charge of the crown jewels in the Tower is therefore a very rich man?

'Oh no! he may be poor, for the jewels are not his; he can neither sell them nor give them away.'

'Yet the Pope can give out from the treasures committed to him. I will give you a closer analogy. You have been in a bank?'

'Oh yes, Madam,' said Bertha; 'the manager of the bank at our town used to go to our Church,'

'And was he very rich?'

'No, he was poor for a gentleman; for he had a lot of little children, and his wife was sickly.'

'But there was lots of money in the bank; why didn't he take all he wanted?'

'It was not his, but other people's.'

'And so it is with the Pope. Christ gives to him the keys of His treasury; but he is still Himself proprietor of the bullion, just as the manager of the bank has the keys of all the money, but can only have the moderate sum allowed him by the company. Those whose money is in the bank write orders to people to whom they wish to pay money; such orders are called cheques, and when these are presented to the banker he gives the people money for them as long as the writer of the cheque has any money left in the bank. The Vicar

of Christ deals in like manner with the heavenly treasury. He proclaims for such and such works of piety you shall have such and such a recompense; but it is not the human being who speaks it, but the Holy Ghost who says it by his mouth. A Catholic does the stipulated good work—he goes to confession and communion; his absolution is his cheque; his angel guardian carries it to the treasury, and the pardon is entered in the Book of God. Now do you see, Edith, how the Pope has treasures to deal out to others, but can only take them himself on exactly the same terms?

'Yes, Madam, I see that. But then, if the Pope has no sin, there is no temporal punishment due to him, and he does not need any Indulgences out of the treasury.'

- 'If, Edith; but who said he had no sin?'
- 'I thought, Madam, he was infallible.'
- 'And he is infallible; but you must not confuse infallible and immaculate: they are two long words, certainly, but they have widely different meanings. There is another equally long word which still better expresses your idea—impeccable, or exempt from sin, unable to sin because he is perfect; but this is also quite different from the meaning of infallible.'
- 'I know what infallibility is,' said Frances, eagerly; 'one of the dear Ritualistic Sisters taught me.'

'Tell us what it is, Frances.'

'The Pope was asleep—that is, Pope Pius was, and an angel came to him in a dream, and touched him, and made him infallible; but it was only that Pope—the new one is not infallible, and it was his soul, and not his body.'

A peal of laughter from the background greeted this announcement of doctrine. The other girls had gathered round the group of converts to listen to the discussion, and Frances's myth was received with the ridicule it deserved. When quiet was restored, Madam gave the explanation.

'Two great promises were made to St. Peter, and to all who should succeed him-that the Spirit of God should always dwell with him and teach him all things, and that Christ should be Himself present in the Church till the consummation of all things. Relying simply on these promises made by God, Who cannot lie, we firmly believe and hold as an article of faith, that the Pope is inspired by the Holy Ghost to do those things that Christ founded His Church to dothat is, to teach all nations, and feed and support the faithful with the sacraments. The Vicar of Christ teaches and governs by the Spirit of God, Who inspires him. Guided by this Spirit—nay, more than that, speaking as His mouthpiece, he cannot err. His commission is to teach faith and

morals, and all that he says in so teaching is God's truth, and infallible. But supposing that the Pope were to come into your kitchen, Frances, and tell you to make a pudding in some extraordinary way, you would not be bound to believe that pudding would be good, nor even to try to make It is not the Pope as a man that cannot err in teaching, or that we have to obey, but the Pope as Christ's Vicar, speaking with His mouth. Holy Ghost speaks with the Pope's voice in governing and teaching the flock of Christ; but when he talks about anything not belonging to the office God has given him, he has just as much sense, or just as little, as another man of similar understanding. Now you see, girls, that this infallibility has nothing to do with being immaculate. The Catechism tells us that "The Blessed Virgin alone, by a special grace and favour of God, and by the merits of her Son," was born without sin. This is what immaculate means. Each Pope is born in original sin, and all his life is open to temptation; his sins have to be forgiven just as ours are. He goes to confession to any priest whom he may choose; he has to say his penance; he has to pray and fast, and mortify himself, just like the poorest Catholic in his kingdom.

'Nay, the poor Pope, far from being independent of the intercessions of others, needs them more than any one of us. In an earthly battle the

fighting is the fiercest where the standard is planted -the uniform of the officer attracts the bravest soldiers to the assault. Thus it is that the devil chooses his most experienced tempters to attack the Pope. He takes infinitely more pains to tempt a priest than he does towards you or memore again to tempt a bishop, and his hottest arsaults are for the Pope. And the Vicar of Christ has to give account to his Lord, as we all shall have to do. But what a far more difficult account! the larger the trust, the greater and more solemn the responsibility. So we must all pray for our Pope, both during his life and after his death, for he has had to wrestle sorely with the devil all his life long in defending us, his family.

'When the late Pope died Mary brought the news to the workroom. Every person there, from the oldest to the youngest, felt that they had lost a Father. The more emotional of the girls shed tears; all were silenced and mourned. Night and morning we said together a De Profundis for his soul; and what happened in our workroom took place in thousands of families all over the Catholic world. The news spread everywhere on the Continent—in India, China, America, Australia. As soon as the telegraph wires carried the news, prayers went up to God for the Father of all the faithful. Millions that night were orphans. For

vears before. Protestants of all shades of opinion had been saying, "There will never be another Pope; the Catholic Church is near her end." But when God called Pio Nono from his charge as Vicar of Christ, and the Catholic Church was orphaned, the Protestant world was paralysed. Not a voice was raised in doubt or in contemptprofound silence prevailed, only respect and sympathy were shown on every side. Sorrow filled every Catholic heart, but not a throb of fear was felt by any. The Vicar was gone, but Christ was here. The Holy Ghost was present, though without a mouthpiece for the moment. Our churches were hung with black-all who could get mourning wore it; but not one heart doubted that God would provide another Father, or that another Vicar would speak in His name.

'The whole Catholic world joined in praying for the repose of the soul of the old Pope, and for the grace of the Holy Ghost to choose a new one. The Protestants stood still and watched us, most of them with kind sympathy. In a very short time the telegraph wires quivered again, bearing to all Christendom the news of a new Pope being appointed. Then the mourning was changed to gladness, bells pealed, the silver trumpets sounded, and from every church and every heart grateful Te Deums arose.

'The Second Commandment of the Church

binds us "To hear Mass on all Sundays and holy-days of obligation."

'It is not long since I explained to you the great value and importance of the Mass as the noblest worship we can render to God, and the most powerful means of bringing His grace upon ourselves. It is because of its supreme value that the Church insists upon our assisting at it each Sunday and holyday of obligation. She does not insist on our going to the High Mass, but it is according to the spirit of her teaching that we should do so; for at High Mass there is a sermon, and it is our bounden duty to hear instructions and study our religion. It is a very bad sign when Catholics dislike sermons, or are inattentive to them; we should listen carefully, for we all need both instruction and exhortation-instruction to increase our knowledge of the will of God, and exhortation to stir us up to be more faithful in obeying it.'

'It was a real treat to go to the sermons during the Mission,' said Edith.

Yes, because the habit of attention was kept up by daily interest. It is more difficult when we only hear preaching one day in the week. The devil always tempts us to think of something else during the sermon; but then, when does he not tempt us? It is only one of the many occasions for us to show on whose side we are fighting.

'Certain things dispense us from the obligation

of hearing Mass on Sundays and holydays of obligation. Sickness, or attendance on the sick, or great distance from church, or such weather as would be dangerous to our health. But anyone finding herself hindered from assisting at Masses of obligation, should lose no time in taking counsel with her confessor. If it is a person in a situation, who, being obliged to earn her living, finds herself placed out of reach of Mass, she is not obliged at once to give up the situation, but she must give her best diligence to find another where she can go to Mass, and that as quickly as possible. on this account that I occupy a great deal of time and thought in finding Catholic places for Catholic governesses and servants, for if they are obliged to absent themselves from Mass for long periods, they are liable either to lose their faith altogether, or to find it grow sadly weaker. It is a pleasure and a privilege to help such if they will act up to their name of Catholic; but it is an unspeakable mortification to me when people sav. "I am doubtful of taking a Catholic again, the last was so inefficient." Now we have been a long time talking very seriously, and here is a girl who can play the piano for you, and also she has a song to teach you. Listen to it, and I will listen also, and rest my voice.'

'ROCK ME TO SLEEP, MOTHER.

- 'Backward, turn backward, O Time, in your flight, Make me a child again, just for to-night. Mother, come back from the echoless shore, Take me again to your heart as of yore. Kiss from my forehead the furrows of care, Smooth a few silver locks out of my hair, Over my slumbers your loving watch keep—Rock me to sleep, mother, rock me to sleep.
- 'Backward, turn backward, O ye tide of years, I have grown weary of toil and of tears—
 Toil without recompense, tears all in vain—
 Take me and give me my childhood again.
 I have grown very weary of dust and decay,
 Weary of flinging my soul's wealth away,
 Weary of sowing for others to reap—
 Rock me to sleep, mother, rock me to sleep.'





CHAPTER XV.

THIRD COMMANDMENT OF THE CHURCH.

HE Feast of SS. Peter and Paul tempted the little Guild out into the country again. Kew Gardens was the choice

this time. The Home girls were there long before the externes could come. They had sung, and lounged, and told stories during the hotter part of the afternoon, under the overshadowing trees, and some of the more adventurous ones had sought out a secluded nook outside the gardens, where they could amuse themselves after the gates were closed. Luckily it was an early-closing day, so their friends arrived before the tea was quite ready. They had again brought tea and sugar with them, and fresh bread and butter, milk, and some fruit had been bought at the trellised garden where they were to have their repast. A merry tea-party it was.

Sarah kept up a constant series of witty sayings, in which she was aided by Sophy and Frances, and mirth prevailed with all. After tea, the whole party adjourned to the green with mademoiselle to be photographed, and a charming group was achieved at a very moderate charge. Then Madam joined them, or rather, they returned to Madam, and found the quiet retreat already chosen. Josephine, the newest apprentice, and the younger ones ran races for a time; and then, as the light waned, they sat down peaceably, and asked for the instruction.

'The Third Commandment of the Church is, "To keep the days of fasting and abstinence appointed by the Church."

'In the Jewish Church, God appointed fasting as well as in the Christian, and the fasts of the Jews are still far more strict than those of the Christians. It is wisely ordained as a means of penance, and it is a wondrous help in attaining that most useful power of self-control.'

'Please, Madam, why do the Protestants go against fasting?' asked Edith.

'The Protestant religion was imposed upon England by a king who devoted himself to self-indulgence. Yet it is rather a practice that has grown upon a system of independence, than a definite rule of any class of religionists. There are fasts marked in the ritual of the Church of England, and the

fasting enjoined in the Book of Common Prayer is as rigorous as that in the Catholic Church, only the larger proportion of her children utterly overlook the fact. Men and women of the world ridicule the practice because it is not agreeable, and they make the first law of their hearts to please themselves. Jesus Christ Himself told us how to fast, and gave us the example of doing so. As the great Pattern for us to imitate, He fasted forty days and forty nights without eating at all. We could not do this: death would end our fast much sooner; but in this, as in His scourging and other sufferings, He, in His marvellous generosity, supported life by His divine Will, so as to endure in excess every penance. Thus He furnished, with His overflowing merits, that treasury of grace of which His Vicar should have the keys, so as to relieve and help His poor weak children therefrom to the end of time. He tells us also how to fast: with cheerful obedience, not looking gloomy and miserable, as if grieving that we could not eat more or have nicer things; -not making a show of our piety, but willingly accepting our Mother's rule; gladly bearing inconvenience in penance for our sins, and anxious to please God as much as ever we can.

'Very few of you are yet subject to the fasting laws; the Church, ever watchful over the health of her children, allows no fasting till full age, that is, twenty-one.

- 'Abstinence becomes our duty from the age when reason begins to act, from seven. Then, or as soon as a child is able to understand what sin is, he makes his first confession, and he begins his life of penance, his conflict against the world, the flesh, and the devil. Then he begins to abstain from flesh meat on certain days.
- 'Fasting restricts not only the kind of food, but the number of meals. Only one full meal is allowed in the day, and that was all that the early Christians had. In these days, when health is weaker, and holy courage in self-denial sadly weaker too, the Church allows two ounces of dry bread and a drink of tea without milk in the early morning, a full meal after twelve o'clock, and a moderate amount of bread and treacle, or bread and jam, and fruit, or vegetables, at night; but not milk, butter, or cheese, and of course not meat.
- 'Miss Canard, mademoiselle, myself, Frances, and Emma, are all who are here subject to this rule, the rest being under twenty-one—all belonging to the Home, I mean; some of our friends here are also above age, I think.'
- 'And are we all bound thus for all Lent, Madam?' asked Frances.
- 'All who are able to do it are strictly so bound, Frances; but there are many reasons which justify us in asking for dispensation.'
- 'Father Lewis is very kind; I am sure I can come round him to dispense me,' she replied.

'Wait a bit. Frances. Priests are always "kind" in this matter to servants and workingpeople, but the responsibility rests with one's self. Any "coming round" is unavailable in transactions with Almighty God. A priest grants a dispensation according as we put our case to him. Suppose we say, "Father, if I fast I shall be very ill, and quite unable to do my work;" he will at once say, "I dispense you from fasting," Remember all who have come to fasting-age, have ceased to be children, and become "good soldiers of Jesus Christ." A soldier does not say. "Please don't put me in the front for fear I may be wounded;" he says. "Put me where I can do my duty to God and my country," or rather, he holds his heart and will ready to do and dare all that his general commands. It is more honest, more plucky, to sav to your confessor, "Let me try if I can fast, and if I find it hurts me I will ask you to give me some other penance instead. Then in fasting be wise, with a good-will desiring to fulfil the precept of the Church; manage your work and your eating with good sense. Take pains to eat well at the one full meal; do your hardest work before you get very hungry: eat your two ounces of dry bread in the morning with thankfulness, don't throw it aside because it is so untempting. Take your collation at night also with childlike thankfulness. You may not like dripping or jam on your bread

well, you are equally free to take it dry. You don't like that either; all the better, it is an opportunity of letting your appetite know that he is your servant, not your master.

'I can assure you, dear girls, that if you wish to pass a profitable and yet cheerful Lent, you will best do so by fasting just as the Church ordains. When one's health gets feeble, and one is obliged to ask for dispensation, a priest will say, "Instead of fasting, say such and such prayers, and mortify your appetite as you conveniently can." One feels that there is no definiteness in such dispensations. One leaves off sugar in one's tea; conscience says, "What is that for a penance?" One leaves off butter; conscience still frets. Whereas, if one fasts just as the Church ordains, then if conscience bothers, we have only to say, "Mother Church has prescribed the penance, it is no business of yours!" I knew one young man, very pious and devoted, but his bad health made it unsafe to fast. The priest told him to leave off his nightly glass of whisky-and-water instead; that was a wise penance, and could do no harm. Last Lent I persuaded you to leave off sweetstoffy and lozenges, I mean—that could not reduce your strength, but it was a great effort for you. Sometimes you leave off sugar, sometimes butter: this is not fasting, it is only a voluntary penance to show that you are loving children of the Church.

'Certain things are good reasons for dispensation—illness, or attendance on the sick, requiring to sit up at night, journeys when proper food for the one full meal cannot be procured, very hard work, long hours of teaching, etc.

'To all who are in health the Lenten fast in spring is very health-giving. Doctors have told me that it is very good for the blood. But our reason for obeying the precept is, that the Church commands it, and we are ambitious to avoid sin and win merit.

'The forty days of Lent are our longest fast, but we have freedom from the fasting on Sundays. Moreover, the Pope gives power to the bishops to mitigate the law according to the needs of their people; and each Lent the bishops issue an indult allowing flesh meat four or five times a week. The Ember Days are also fasting days. These fasts are appointed before Ordinations, that the Church may pray and offer good works for the men about to receive that holy sacrament.

'The Vigils, or days before most of the great feasts, are fasting days, to help us to repent and to cleanse our hearts for the coming feast. Abstinence is enjoined more frequently than fasting. Every Friday is a day of abstinence, and also the Wednesdays in Advent. The Sundays of Lent used to be also days of abstinence, but now leave is always given to eat meat on them.'

'Please, Madam, Protestants do say that it is too childish to leave off meat on Fridays.'

'Never mind what they say, Bertha. If obedience is childish, it suits us the better, for we are all children of the Church. It is as a test of our obedience that the Church gives it to us. God made an apple the test of obedience to our first parents, and to say that God is childish would be to speak blasphemy. It is also a tonic to the power of our conscience; to deny our appetites one day a week increases our moral strengththat power of self-control which I am always urging you to cultivate. Protestants also argue that Our Lord said it was not that which went into a man that would defile him, but that which came out, as thefts, lies, etc. Very well; by this same argument, meat on Friday would defile, because of the act of disobedience it causes.

'All the works of penance—be they fastings, or the prayers the priest gives us to say instead of fasting, or the giving of alms—all these God accepts instead of some part of the temporal punishment due to our sins, and we can give them away to the poor souls in Purgatory, if our love for them, or our desire to please Jesus, is greater than our desire to escape punishment ourselves. It is getting near the time for our train, and the light is fast waning, so we must now hasten to the station.'

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A very few minutes brought them there. The train was not at all full, so they got a whole carriage to themselves, and were able to sing at pleasure all the way home. They sang 'Faith of our Fathers,' in honour of the two great Apostles, and they made a very fair attempt at singing the Litany of the Saints. Then they sang a hymn to Our Lady; and then all the old favourites, 'Cuckoo,' 'The Two Flies,' and 'Good Old Catholic Times.'





CHAPTER XVI.

THE FOURTH, FIFTH, AND SIXTH COMMANDMENTS
OF THE CHURCH.

HE following Sunday being a great feast at a neighbouring church, with Pontifical Benediction and procession, the instruc-

tion took place as soon as the girls assembled, that there might be time later to attend the function. The Directress began by saying:

'The Fourth and Fifth Commandments of the Church, "To go to confession at least once a year," and "To receive the Blessed Sacrament at least once a year, and that at Easter or thereabouts," are so closely united that we can well discuss them together.

'The Church imposes on her children the Fast of Lent: it begins by the external sign of ashes put upon the head, with the words, "Remember,

man, that thou art dust, and must return to dust again." From Ash Wednesday onward, all the Scriptures and the Collects urge us to think upon our sins, and sorrow for them; first, by putting before us our certain death, then by the thought of punishment, and thirdly, by depicting ever more and more forcibly the ransom paid for sin in the sufferings and death of Christ. Every faithful child of the Church reading her missal at her Masses of obligation, and listening to the sermons week by week, hears and thinks of the fast of Jesus, the sorrow requisite for the pardon of sin, the penitents described in Holy Scripture, and the sufferings Jesus endured in atoning our iniquities. All this is to lead us on to a good confession. From the age of seven years children are taught to go to confession. They learn to ask the help of God in finding out their sins; they learn the nature of sin, and how to detest it in their own lives. They learn as soon as they find out their sins to turn to God with hearty sorrow and regret, saying, "My God, I am sorry that I have sinned against Thee, because Thou art so good, and I will not sin again." Then they go into the confessional, and simply tell to the priest all their transgressions. This is the history of confession from seven years old till the last day of life.

'The wise thing for us each to do is to go to confession often. It is easier to remember our

faults by going frequently. Also it is well to get the stain of sin washed off as soon as possible. People are careful not to leave a stain long on their clothes, for it wants much harder washing if it is left long; it is the same with a stain on the soul. Moreover every time that we make a good confession, a new grace is given to us to help us to resist sin in future, therefore the sooner we get the grace the better, and the oftener we get it the better. Another reason for frequent confession is that we get strength to keep our good resolutions in that sacrament, and what we promise the priest in confession we have a much better chance of keeping than if we promised it at another time. But the Church loves to give her children a great deal of freedom, for she is of one mind with her Divine Spouse, who will not take even our affections by force, but says, "Son, give me thy heart." She loves that her children should repair often to the sacrament of cleansing; but she only insists on them resorting to this sacrament once every year.

'In the ages of Faith, when the law of the land was framed on the law of the Church, no one was thought fit for any appointment under Government who had not fulfilled what we call "the Easter duties," this annual confession and communion. Nay, people would not even engage a servant without seeing her Easter certificate. I experienced a proof of this one Easter that I spent in

Italy, for after communion a clerk came and gave to each communicant a little printed certificate.

'Now, children, I want you to try to picture to yourself the feelings of the Vicar of Christ, and of His priest, even of our Blessed Lord Himself, as Lent wears on towards Easter. All the general run of Catholics, such as ourselves, try to do some penance, to pray a little more, take pains to make good confessions, and fix their minds on the Passion of Jesus. Passion Week comes, we no longer gaze on the statue of Virgin or Saint, or on the Crucifix: we feel dreary. Ask why it is-ah, it is because sorrow is coming, and sin is hateful, and pardon costs pain. Then come some whose faces are unfamiliar around the confessional; perhaps it is since Christmas that their sins lie on their consciences-they may be few or many. A number of faithful Catholics, accustomed from infancy to less frequent resort to the sacraments, yet leading good lives, come now, and their prayers have power with God, and swell the tide of increased prayer and devotion that rises from the Church day by day. Those who come seldom, because their attachment to sin is strong, even they do violence to themselves at this time, break off the sinful habit, sorrow for guilt incurred, and make some resolutions of amendment. These prayers, absent generally or clogged with sin, are now poured into the swelling stream, and flowing from souls in a

state of grace, are sweet to the ear of God. Many come urged by faithful friends. All Lent the loving wife has prayed for her husband's conversion, the sister for the brother, the child for her father, the maid for her mistress, friend for friend. Easter approaches, and one after another these wandering sheep come and receive pardon and grace. The angels in heaven sing anew to their golden harps at the reconciliation of each one of them, and the prayers of the penitents swell vet more the stream of the Church's devotion. Easter comes, the one communion of obligation in the year. Not that the Church insists on it being made on Easter Day, but about that time. Easter comes with its myriads Jesus Christ comes down of communicants. from heaven to embrace His spouse, the Church. Into a million churches He comes; but time and space are nothing to Him; He sees all as one. Millions of Catholics receive Him in the sacramental species, but altogether it is His Bride fresh washed from sin, white and pure as Eve in paradise-washed in His own Blood, sanctified by His Holy Spirit, united with Him in heart and life by devout sympathy in His passion and death, and by the actual union in Holy Communion. Such are the Easter duties—such the reason for our keeping Lent.

'The Jewish Church had as solemn a feast—the Passover, which was a type and foreshadowing of our Easter. The then Church of God was commanded to take a lamb "without blemish," to kill it, and sprinkle its blood on the door-posts of the house; then they were to roast it with fire, and eat it with bitter herbs, thus pointing to Jesus, "the Lamb of God," and the bitter contrition needed for sin. At midnight the destroying angel came and killed the firstborn in every house; but wherever he saw the blood he did not enter, thus showing that we must get our hearts and consciences sprinkled with the Blood of the Lamb of God, that the anger of God may be appeased and our souls saved.

'It was a strict law of the Jews that every man able to travel should go up to this feast, and Jesus, though in danger of being slaughtered, went up to it, for He said, "With a great desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." He fulfilled the law fully, and then He changed the old into the new. After He had eaten the Passover. He took bread and broke, and consecrated, and gave it to His disciples, and said, "Take eat, this is My Body; do this in remembrance of Me." He took the cup and said, "Drink ye of this, for It is My Blood." Thus he closed the dispensation of bloody sacrifices, and substituted the unbloody Sacrifice of the Mass. Instead of commanding His future Vicar and His priests to kill and sprinkle blood, He endowed them with the miraculous

power of giving life, of turning bread into His divine Body, and wine into His divine Blood, and this to enable Him to enter into the hearts of His children, as He says, "My delights are with the sons of men." It is the desire of the Church that her children have recourse frequently to this Sacrament of Love. The giving it was the last act of Jesus before His Passion. He could not have said that His work was perfected-"It is consummated "--till He had instituted this sacrament to feed and support His children during all their life here. Physical life cannot be sustained, health cannot be good, strength and growth cannot be gained, without eating wholesome food; and in the same manner spiritual life cannot be sustained, the soul cannot enjoy spiritual health, spiritual progress cannot be made, except we partake regularly of the Body and Blood of our divine Lord. The Church only insists on one communion in the year, but this is, as I told you in regard of the other sacrament, that she wishes the free-will devotion of her children as the only offering dear to the Heart of Jesus. We may find out the secret desires of our Mother, the Church, by the rewards she offers. More than once in every month a Plenary Indulgence is offered on condition of our going to the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist. By practising certain devotions, such indulgences can be gained weekly. Holy Eucharist was ordained by Christ to give strength to our souls, but it also forgives sin in an indirect manner. As I heard a holy priest explain in a mission—the sins we confess on Saturday night we have imperfect contrition for; we wish we had not done them: we are in a degree sorry for having offended the good God-sorry for what was grievous, but insensible to many a lesser offence. It is as if children had been playing on the sea-shore, and making a lot of dirt and litter, and the sand is trodden into heaps, and while they gather up the ugliest dirt, lots of straws and bits of paper are left lying about, and all looks unsightly. The morning comes: we kneel to receive the Body of Christ. He enters our souls, our hearts bound at His touch; we are penetrated by His love; we yearn to love Him back again. Our thoughts refer to the sins confessed last night; we look tearfully in His countenance now, so sorry to have offended one Whose love has come so close to us. trition is now perfect in kind, though miserably imperfect in degree; but the forgiveness is now full. It is as if the full tide of the Atlantic rolled on to the tossed-up shore, and forthwith the retreating waves leave the sands smooth and clean. and no atom of straw or rubbish is left behind.

'After the vacation, we will speak together of the sacraments one by one, and the preparation for them; of the Ceremonies of the Church and the principal devotions she proposes to her children. To-day's instruction concludes those on the commandments

'The Sixth Commandment of the Church. "Not to marry within certain degrees of kindred, nor to selemnise marriage at forbidden times," refers only to those about to marry. Man, as well as God-or rather, man by the teaching of God, though unrecognised, disapproves of the marriage of those related in blood. Sickness and mental weakness very often falls on the children of such marriages. and both common sense and religion are opposed to them. Lent and Advent being the seasons chosen by the Church for spiritual recollection, she does not allow marriages at those times.

'And now, dear girls, we separate for a time. To-morrow the holidays of the Home-girls com-Many of you have kind friends to go to. who will be glad of your company for the time. Our good Director will send the two or three ailing ones to the seaside. Your mistresses will also have change and recreation, and I shall visit many distant friends. The externes, too, in many cases, are leaving town, some in attendance on their ladies, or the families they serve, some for recrea-But wherever we go, let us carry the Commandments of God and the Church written on our hearts; wherever we are, let us give each day the first thought to God, rising briskly as a sacrifice to Him, though we rise to pleasure rather

than to work. Never let morning or night prayers be forgotten, nor the Mass on Sunday be neglected. All these things are as easy abroad as at home. But to keep the tongue from sin, to avoid all slander and detraction, will be much more difficult when mingling with strangers. When a good general knows that there is danger of attack in a certain point, he posts his best soldiers there; summon, therefore, your most earnest resolutions and prayers to guard your tongue. In witty conversation where you have the good intention to amuse your neighbour, you will be tempted to the coarse jests I have warned you of. Allusions to low songs or other things against holy purity, to detract from the virtue of your neighbour, to utter falsehood in telling of things strange to your hearers. Acts of the Presence of God, Acts of Charity to God and your neighbour—these, just in little thoughts and ejaculations which nobody will know anything about—these will be your best guards against this danger. Beware also of envyings in seeing the pleasant possessions of others. living in the fear and love of God, I have not the smallest doubt of your holidays being both safe and profitable.

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